



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Inside the European Parliament

A guide to its parliamentary and administrative structures



OFFICE FOR PROMOTION OF PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

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PREFACE

The Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD) was created in 2008 within the Directorate-General for External Policies (DG EXPO) of the European Parliament (EP). Its principal objective is to support parliaments of new and emerging democracies (NEDs) beyond the EU's borders. The OPPD assists in the establishment and the reform of these parliaments and aims at strengthening their capacity to implement the chief functions of lawmaking, oversight and representation. The creation of the OPPD responds to a rapidly increasing demand from NED parliaments and the willingness of the EP to actively share its experiences and expertise. A second objective is to assist the EP in the development of a more comprehensive EU democracy policy, but also to help strengthen the EP's oversight of the European Commission's democracy support programmes.

Sustainable democratic development does not end with successfully completed free and fair elections; rather, such elections are only a first step. In order to achieve democratic maturity, long-term and comprehensive efforts to build up and consolidate representative and well-functioning parliaments are of paramount importance.

The OPPD provides demand-driven and tailor-made technical assistance to NED parliaments covering areas such as: the principal functions of parliaments, administrative and institutional reform, inter-parliamentary legislative cooperation and sharing of best practices. Its tools and methods include strategic counselling for NED parliaments, targeted training and long-term fellowships geared towards officials as well as networking opportunities with MEPs and relevant services of the EP.

In this Guide, the OPPD presents an overview of the parliamentary and administrative structure of the European Parliament in order to familiarise members and administrators of NED parliaments with the political and secretarial management aspects of the parliamentary machinery. It touches upon the statutes of members, their salary and allowances, the role and financing of the political groups, the organisation of the parliamentary agenda, the management of committees, the organisation chart of the secretariat, the selection procedure of its administrators, and many other aspects necessary within a parliamentary organisation.

We hope this Guide will provide useful insights and be a helpful tool in supporting the development of parliamentary democracy worldwide.

INTRODUCTION

“Instead of the function of governing, for which it is radically unfit, the proper office of a representative assembly is to watch and control the government”

John Stuart Mill

The European Parliament forms the democratic basis of the European Union, representing the citizens across the 27 EU Member States. It is one of the biggest parliaments worldwide and the only multinational parliamentary assembly in the world entirely elected by direct universal suffrage. Its origins go back to the 1950s and the founding Treaties of the European Communities. Since 1979, the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have been directly elected by the people. Elections are held every five years and every EU citizen is entitled to vote and to stand as a candidate, wherever they live in the EU.

The number of MEPs has increased in line with the successive accessions of new countries to the EU. The Parliament expresses nowadays the democratic will of the Union's nearly 500 million citizens and it represents their interests vis-à-vis the other EU institutions, namely the European Commission and the Council of Ministers, the latter representing the Member States' governments.

MEPs sit in cross-national parliamentary caucuses, in the EP referred to as 'political groups', formed on the basis of ideological affiliation rather than nationality. In order to assert the role of the Parliament in the EU's institutional triangle, MEPs have to cooperate and the political organisation of the groups is such that political group coordinators work together across party lines to reach compromises.

As all proper parliaments do, the European Parliament debates and adopts laws that have an impact on the daily lives of its citizens, for example on: environmental protection, consumer rights, equal opportunities, health, transport, and the free movement of workers, capital, services and goods. What might seem absolutely normal, for a long time was not a given. Initially, MEPs were only able to give an opinion on legislative proposals from the European Commission, whereas it was always the Council which had the last word on adopting laws. However, over the years, with the adoption of successive Treaties and hence the modification of EU primary law, the role and powers of the European Parliament have grown substantially to the point where it is now a key player in the process of making secondary law. Nowadays, in most cases, if a European Regulation or Directive is to come into being, Parliament and the Council must first agree on its content in a procedure which used to be known as 'codecision' and which today, since the coming into force of the 'Lisbon Treaty' in December 2009, is called 'the ordinary legislative procedure'.

Next to making law, parliamentary oversight is an important task which the European Parliament has always taken very seriously and where it has acquired important responsibilities. Generally speaking, the increasing complexity of today's societies has shifted the balance of power firmly in favour of the executive and the influence of elected parliamentarians often lags behind. Parliamentary oversight is therefore quintessential to bring balance within the powers, ensure proper use of resources and favour good and effective policies.

Oversight comprises monitoring and reviewing the actions of the executive branches of government and holding these accountable by letting them explain and justify their decisions and actions. It also entails assessing whether decisions and actions are legal, in conformity with parliament's policy objectives and to the benefit of citizens. The budget process is for instance a key opportunity for effective scrutiny.

Effective parliamentary scrutiny is the first line of defence against improper practices of government and the foundation for promoting a greater sense of responsibility among decision-makers. The development of an effective parliamentary 'culture of scrutiny' is very much in the hands of the elected parliamentarians and entails both legislative and budgetary oversight.

The European Parliament exercises important oversight functions. It controls how the European Commission, often referred to as the executive arm of the EU, implements, in cooperation with EU Member States, adopted legislation and the various EU programmes.

Importantly, the Commission's mandate is dependent on Parliament's approval of its President and the 'college' of Commissioners. Two separate votes are cast before they come into office and after they have undergone parliamentary hearings. Furthermore, Parliament has the power to dismiss the entire leadership of the Commission (the 'college') through a vote of censure – an option Parliament has so far not used. However, in one case the dismissal was averted only by the Commission's collective resignation hours before such a vote would have taken place. The resignation of the Commission in that case was closely related to another power that the European Parliament holds, which is that of budget oversight. Parliament not only amends, adopts and signs into existence the annual budget of the Union, it also verifies – based on reports by the separate EU Court of Auditors – the execution of the budget. In this context, Parliament can decide to withhold or to refuse to discharge the Commission (and other EU bodies) for its execution of the budget.

The European Parliament has three places of work: Strasbourg (France), Brussels (Belgium) and Luxembourg. The official seat is in Strasbourg, on the border between France and Germany, a location that, at least in the eyes of some, symbolises reconciliation in Europe after two world wars. Parliament holds 12 plenary part-sessions every year in Strasbourg while its committee meetings and additional plenary part-sessions are held in Brussels. Debates in Parliament's chamber are conducted in all the EU's official national languages, reflecting a commitment to a plural and multicultural Union which is 'united in diversity'. Luxembourg is home to some of the administrative services of the Secretariat.

With an annual budget approaching nearly € 2 billion and almost 8 000 staffers on its payroll working in 23 different working languages and an increasing role in determining the policies of the European Union, the European Parliament has become a highly complex machine. It is not comparable to any other parliament in the world, national or transnational, yet it does perform in all the three core parliamentary businesses: legislation - control - representation. How it does this and to what avail, as well as how it has managed to transform itself from the mere "talking shop" it was referred to for decades into the fully fledged parliamentary institution it is seen as today, has been comprehensively described in books such as 'The European Parliament'¹ or "Europe's Parliament - People, Places, Politics".²

1 by Richard Corbett, Francis Jacobs and Michael Shackleton (now already in its 8th edition)

2 by Julian Priestley and Steve Clark, 2012

This guide does not seek to compete with or replace these publications but rather to offer some light on the inner workings and backroom facilities.

The information provided here is not entirely new or original; on the contrary, it is based on information that is available elsewhere, albeit dispersed or in a format that is not easily accessible. Rather, the Guide has been inspired by the many study visits that the OPPD has organised over the past years for visiting staff and members of parliaments who requested further reading on many of the issues touched upon during presentations and discussions with our own members and colleagues. No single document was able to respond to these requests.

The information set out in this Guide is thus drawn mainly from the EP's Rules of Procedure, the Statute for MEPs, the Handbook for Members as well as from information available on the EP's intranet (including the so-called Compendium of Rules) and the public EP website. It also draws on material that colleagues throughout the EP secretariat, including several OPPD interns, have prepared specifically for presentations for study visit groups hosted by the OPPD. Their contributions and the helpful comments by several colleagues on earlier drafts of the Guide are much appreciated.

Dick TOORNSTRA

Director

Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD)

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1. Historical overview

Following the creation of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) by the Treaty of Rome in 1957, the European Coal and Steel Community's *Common Assembly* was expanded to cover all three Communities. With 142 Members, the Assembly met for the first time in Strasbourg on 19 March 1958 as the 'European Parliamentary Assembly', subsequently changing its name to 'European Parliament'. The European Parliament, still being a relatively young parliament, has over 50 years developed its role and powers considerably.

1.1 From appointed assembly to elected parliament

Before direct elections, MEPs were appointed by and from each of the Member States' national parliaments. All Members thus had a dual mandate. The Decision and Act on European elections by direct universal suffrage were signed in Brussels on 20 September 1976. After ratification by all the Member States, the text came into force on 1 July 1978. The first direct elections then took place between 7 and 10 June 1979.

1.2 Enlargements of the EU increased the number of EP Members

Several enlargements of the European Union have led to an increase in the number of MEPs. The distribution of seats is such that it is digressively proportional to the population of each Member State, meaning that MEPs from bigger states represent more citizens than those from smaller states. This is to allow for a representation of the main political leanings in the smaller countries within the European Parliament (which would not be the case if they were to elect only one or two MEPs).

With the June 2009 elections (taking place before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty in December 2009) the number of seats was reduced to 736. The Treaty of Lisbon, however, provides for 751 Members but the number of MEPs temporarily increased to 754 in this term, i.e. until 2014, as part of a transitional system, ensuring that all MEPs elected in June 2009 can in fact remain Members for the full term and that those countries which have additional MEPs under Lisbon do have these additional Members.

1.3 Gradual increase in powers: the reform treaties

The replacement of Member States' contributions to the budget by so-called 'Own Resources' led to a first extension of Parliament's budgetary powers under the [Treaty of Luxembourg](#), signed on 22 April 1970. A second treaty on the same subject, strengthening Parliament's powers, was signed in Brussels on 22 July 1975.

The [Single European Act](#) (entry into force in January 1987) enhanced Parliament's role in certain legislative areas by the introduction of the 'cooperation procedure' for the adoption of some legal acts and it made accession and association treaties subject to Parliament's consent.

The [Maastricht Treaty](#) (signed in 1992, entry into force in November 1993), introduced 'codecision' by the EP and the Council in certain areas of legislation and extended the cooperation procedure to others. It marked the beginning of Parliament's metamorphosis into the role of co-legislator. It gave Parliament the power of final approval over the composition of the political leadership

of the European Commission, which was an important step forward in Parliament's political control over the European executive. Parliament was given a number of other rights in relation to appointments: a right to vote on the appointment of the Commission, as well as on that of the European Ombudsman.

The **Treaty of Amsterdam** (signed in 1997, entry into force May 1999) extended codecision to more areas of legislation and reformed the procedure, putting Parliament as co-legislator on an equal footing with the Council. With the appointment of the President of the Commission being made subject to Parliament's approval, Parliament further increased its control over the EU's executive arm of government.

The **Treaty of Nice** (signed in 2001, entry into force in February 2003) extended the scope of the codecision procedure in seven provisions of the EC Treaty: measures to support antidiscrimination action of the Member States, certain measures for issuing visas, measures on asylum and on certain refugee matters, measures in the field of judicial cooperation in civil matters, support measures in the industrial field, actions in the field of economy and social cohesion and regulations governing political parties at European level and in particular the rules regarding their funding.

On 13 December 2007 the leaders of the 27 EU Member States signed the **Treaty of Lisbon**, thus bringing to an end several years of negotiations about institutional issues. The Treaty of Lisbon amends, reorganises and renames the previous versions of the EU and EC treaties. The three main legal instruments of EU primary law are now the *Treaty on European Union (TEU)*, the *Treaty on the functioning of the EU (TFEU)* and the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*.

With the Treaty of Lisbon the European Parliament has been given important new powers over EU legislation, the EU budget and international agreements. In particular, the extension of codecision into virtually all areas of legislation will ensure the European Parliament (representing the citizens) is placed fully on an equal footing with the Council (representing Member States) for the vast bulk of EU legislation.

Lawmaking: the 'codecision procedure', is now called the 'ordinary legislative procedure' and it is extended to several new fields. This means that Parliament now has the same degree of lawmaking power as the Council in areas where it used to be merely consulted or not involved at all. These areas include legal immigration, penal judicial cooperation (Eurojust, crime prevention, alignment of prison standards, offences and penalties), police cooperation (Europol) and some aspects of trade policy, fisheries and agriculture.

Budget: the new treaty confirms and formalises the established practice of working with a multiannual financial framework (MFF), which Parliament will have to approve in the future. It abolishes the previous distinction between 'compulsory' expenditure (including, for example, support to farmers) and 'non-compulsory' expenditure, with the result that Parliament and the Council will determine all expenditure jointly. This innovation creates a new balance between the two institutions when approving the EU's budget.

International agreements: under the Treaty of Lisbon, the European Parliament's assent is required for most international agreements including all those related to policies governed by the ordinary legislative procedure.

National parliaments will have greater opportunities to be involved in the work of the EU, in particular thanks to a new mechanism which allows them to monitor that the Union only legislates in cases where results can better be attained at EU, rather than national or regional level. Together

with the strengthened role for the European Parliament, this change will enhance democratic oversight and increase legitimacy of the Union.

The Treaty also introduces a 'Citizens' Initiative' which allows one million citizens from several Member States to call on the Commission to bring forward new policy proposals and thus introduces for the first time elements of direct democracy.

Qualified majority voting in the Council is extended to new policy areas to make decision-making faster and more efficient. From 2014 on, the calculation of qualified majority will be based on a double majority of Member States and people, thus strengthening the dual legitimacy of the Union. A double majority will be achieved when a decision is taken in Council by 55% of the Member States representing at least 65% of the Union's population.

The Treaty of Lisbon establishes the European Council (bringing together the heads of state and government) as an official EU institution and creates the function of President of the European Council elected by the European Council for two and a half years. The Lisbon Treaty also introduces a direct link between the election of the Commission President and the results of the European elections.

The new Treaty improves the EU's ability to act in several policy areas of major priority for today's Union and its citizens. This is the case in particular for the policy areas related to citizens' rights, home affairs and justice (including the fight against terrorism or tackling crime). It also concerns to some extent energy policy, public health, civil protection, climate change, services of public interest, research, space, territorial cohesion, commercial policy, humanitarian aid, sport and tourism.

While preserving existing rights, the Treaty of Lisbon introduces new ones. In particular, it guarantees the freedoms and principles set out in the EU's Charter of Fundamental Rights and gives its provisions a binding legal force. It also foresees the EU's accession to the European Convention on Human Rights.

A new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy who heads the new External Action Service (a new EU diplomatic corps) and who is also a Vice-President of the Commission, should increase the impact, coherence and visibility of the EU's external action.

2

2. Panorama of Parliament's functions and powers

The assertion of Parliament's institutional role in European policy-making is a result of the exercise of its different functions. Respect of democratic principles at the European level is ensured through: (1) Parliament's participation in the legislative process, (2) its budgetary and (3) control powers and (4) its right to take or support an action before the European Court of Justice. The representative function of parliaments is assured through MEPs' regular contacts with both ordinary citizens in their constituency and with European or national level interest groups and supported by Parliament's communication and information activities. In addition, the European Parliament elects the Ombudsman responsible for examining complaints about maladministration, and citizens also have the right to petition Parliament directly.

2.1 Participation in the legislative process

Although the Commission has the (almost exclusive) right of initiative in the EU system, the European Parliament can ask the Commission to put forward a proposal by means of an own-initiative report.

Under a new framework agreement, concluded between the Commission and Parliament in 2010, the Commission undertakes to report on the concrete follow-up given to any legislative initiative request from Parliament within three months of such a request being adopted by Parliament in plenary. Under the same agreement the Commission is committed to come forward with a legislative proposal within a year or to include the proposal in the next year's annual legislative and work programme. If the Commission does not submit a proposal, it shall give Parliament a detailed explanation of the reasons.

The Parliament takes part in the drafting of Community legislation to varying degrees, according to the individual legal basis, and has progressed from a purely advisory role to codecision on an equal footing with the Council of Ministers. Even before the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty, two thirds of European Union legislation was adopted jointly by the European Parliament and the Council.

The **ordinary legislative procedure**, based on Art. 294 TFEU, consists of up to three stages and gives Parliament a right of veto. The general outline of this procedure is as follows:

A Commission proposal is presented to the European Parliament and the Council.

First reading (*no time limit*)

Parliament adopts or does not adopt amendments to the Commission proposal.

- If it does not adopt amendments and if the Council also accepts the Commission proposal, the act is adopted by the Council by qualified majority
- If Parliament adopts amendments:
 - If the Council approves all the EP amendments and does not change the Commission proposal otherwise, the act is adopted by the Council (by qualified majority or unanimity as far as amendments are concerned which the Commission explicitly opposes)
 - If the Council does not approve all the amendments or rejects them, the Council adopts a 'Common Position' by qualified majority, which is forwarded to Parliament. It must provide a full explanation of its reasons. The Commission informs Parliament of its position.

Second reading

Parliament has three possibilities for action within three months:

- if it approves the Council's Common Position or if it does not deliver an opinion within that period, the act is deemed adopted in accordance with the Common Position.
- if it rejects the Common Position by an absolute majority of its Members, the act is deemed not to have been adopted.
- if it adopts amendments to the Common Position by an absolute majority of its Members, the text is forwarded to the Council and Commission for their opinion on the amendments. In the last case:
 - either the Council approves all Parliament's amendments by qualified majority (or unanimity as far as amendments which the Commission has opposed in its opinion are concerned), in which case the act is deemed adopted and signed by the Presidents of Parliament and the Council
 - or the Council informs Parliament that it does not approve all its amendments to the Common Position, in which case the President of the Council and the President of Parliament agree on a date and place for a first meeting of the Conciliation Committee within a six week period.

Third reading

The Conciliation Committee, which comprises members of the Council (one per Member State) and an equal number of MEPs, considers the Common Position voted at second reading on the basis of Parliament's amendments. It has six weeks to draw up a joint text (the deadline can be extended by 2 weeks).

- If the Conciliation Committee does not approve a joint text, the act is deemed not to have been adopted and the procedure is terminated. The Commission may, however, prepare a new proposal on the same matter.
- If the Conciliation Committee approves a joint text, it is presented to the Council and the full Parliament for approval. The Council and Parliament have six weeks to approve it; the Council takes a decision by qualified majority and Parliament by a majority of the votes cast. The act is adopted if the Council and Parliament approve the joint text.

2.2 Budgetary authority: the power of the purse

The European Parliament and the Council of the European Union together constitute the Union's **budgetary authority**, which decides each year on the Union's expenditure. Parliament acquired its first powers in this regard in the 1970s. The Lisbon Treaty altered the procedure to adopt the budget substantially and the 2011 budget was the first to be adopted under the new procedure and amounted to € 141.9 billion in commitments.

Before the Lisbon Treaty the European Parliament had the final word on the amounts entered into the budget for so-called 'non-compulsory expenditure' (expenditure in areas for which the EU had no direct legal obligation to make payments) as long as Parliament respected overall ceilings for different expenditure categories set in the EU's agreed 'multiannual financial framework' for several years. The Council *de facto* had the last word on 'compulsory expenditure' although no budget could come into force without the Parliament plenary adopting it in second reading and the Parliament President signing it, usually in December. The Lisbon Treaty abolished the distinction between non-compulsory and compulsory spending and obliges the two sides of the budgetary authority (EP and Council) to come to a comprehensive agreement on the entire budget.

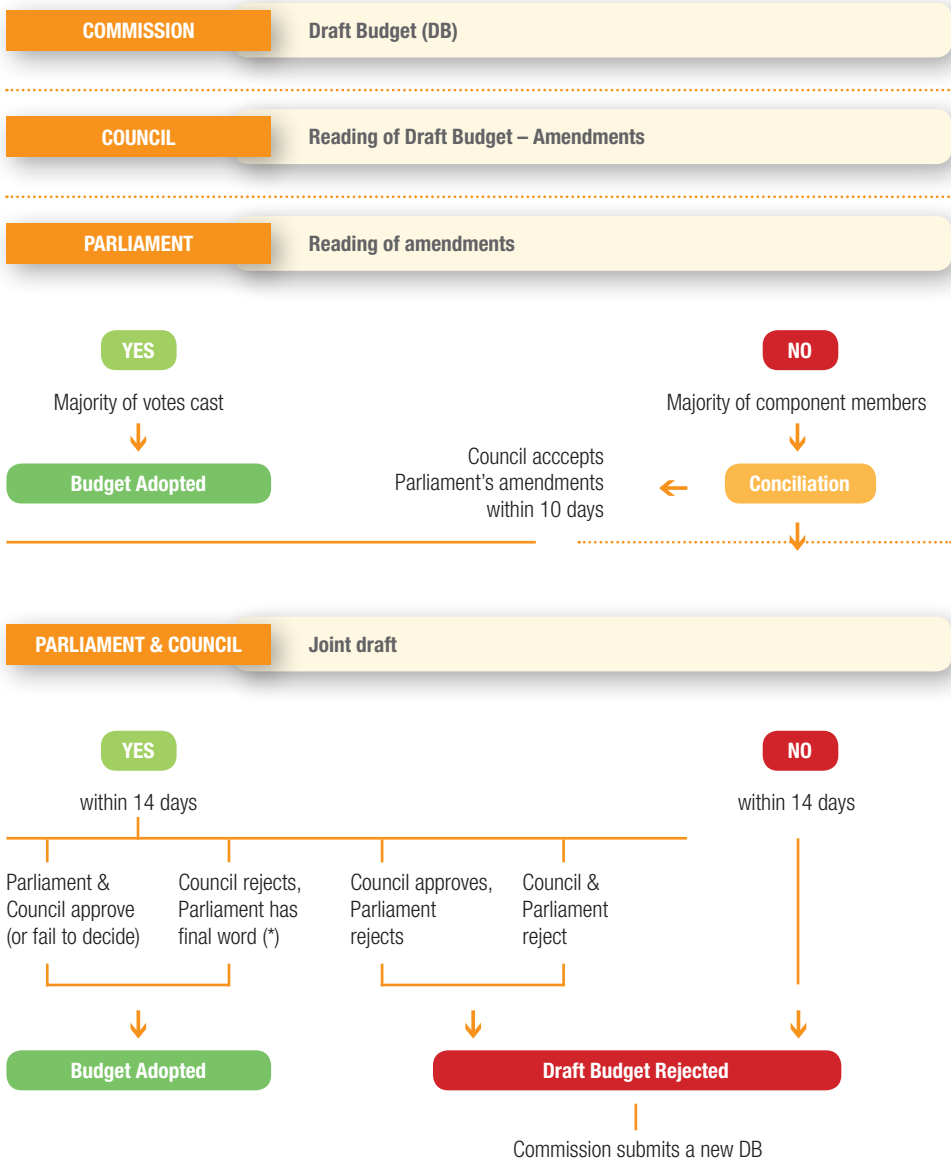
The procedure itself is simplified as there is now only one reading in each institution, based on the draft budget presented by the Commission. The procedure of examining, and then adopting, the draft budget takes place between June and December. As before, the European Parliament and the Council must adhere to the annual spending limits laid down in the multi-annual financial perspective.

The budget is adopted for one year, following the principle of annuality (the budget year begins on 1 January and ends on 31 December). The Commission prepares a draft budget, which it submits to the Council. On this basis the Council adopts a position on the budget which it forwards to the European Parliament (no later than 1 October). The Parliament then has 42 days to accept, reject or amend the draft. In the case of the latter a conciliation committee is convened (unless the Council declares, within ten days, to accept all of Parliament's amendments). The conciliation committee (consisting of an equal number of MEPs and Council representatives) has 21 days to reach agreement on a joint text. In (the unlikely) case that the committee does adopt a joint text which is subsequently rejected by the Council, Parliament has the final word and can adopt the budget with an absolute majority (and 2/3 of votes cast). If no joint text is agreed or if Parliament rejects the joint text, the Commission is supposed to come forward with a new proposal. If no budget is adopted by 1 January, the Union operates on a system of "provisional twelfths", meaning that the institution can spend each month: "not more than one twelfth of the budget appropriations for the preceding financial year in respect of any chapter of the budget" until a new budget is adopted.

The budget cannot be implemented until it has been signed by the President of the European Parliament.

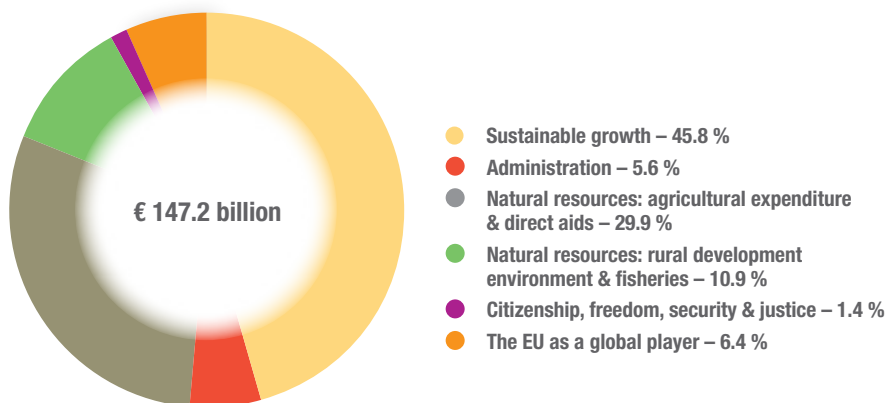
The Committee on Budgetary Control monitors the Union's expenditure on a permanent basis. The European Parliament, on a recommendation from the Council and on the basis of the annual report of the EU Court of Auditors gives the Commission a discharge for the implementation of the budget (see below).

The Budgetary Procedure



*) i.e. Parliament approves the joint text and then, within 14 days of Council rejection, decides (by a majority of its component members & 3/5 of the votes cast) to confirm all or some of its amendments from the first reading.

The 2012 Budget (General Budget of the EU without amending budgets)



2.3 Control over the executive

The European Parliament exercises democratic control over the **Commission** and there is also a certain parliamentary oversight over the activities of the **Council**.

A. Investiture of the Commission

Parliament began informally approving the investiture of the Commission in 1981 by approving its programme. However, it was only after the Maastricht Treaty came into force (1993) that its approval was required before the Member States could appoint the President and Members of the Commission as a collegiate body. The Amsterdam Treaty has taken matters further by requiring Parliament's specific approval for the appointment of the Commission President, prior to that of the other Commissioners.

Both in 2009/2010 and in 2004 Parliament used, if not its legal but its political power, to force a reshuffle of the Commission team as it had been proposed by the Commission President, including the withdrawal of candidates nominated by Member States.

B. Financial control

Oversight of the budget is mainly maintained through two instruments:

- The Committee on Budgetary Control monitors the Union's expenditure on a permanent basis;
- The European Parliament, on a recommendation from the Council of the European Union, gives the Commission a discharge for the implementation of the budget.

The right to grant discharge is the basis of Parliament's powers of budgetary control. Discharge is a more than necessary final act in adopting the Communities' accounts. The events of 1999, during which the Parliament rejected a motion to grant discharge to the Commission of Jacques Santer for the implementation of the 1996 financial year, could be taken as an example of the major political reprimand to the Commission on the perceived failure of fulfilment of its tasks.

C. The motion of censure

The Treaty of Rome (1957) already made provision for a motion of censure against the Commission. The motion requires a two-thirds majority of the votes cast, representing a majority of Parliament's Members, and, if adopted, the Commission must resign as a body. This is a fundamental instrument that can be exercised by the Members of the European Parliament to ensure democratic control within the Union. There have been only eight motions of censure since the beginning and none has been adopted, but the Commission of Jacques Santer resigned in 1999 pre-empting a vote of censure.

D. Parliamentary questions

Tabling written and oral questions by MEPs to the **Council** and the **Commission** is one of Parliament's means of exercising supervision. The Commission and Council are required to reply within a reasonable time.

E. Committees of inquiry

The Parliament has the power to set up a temporary committee of inquiry to investigate alleged contraventions or maladministration in the implementation of Community law.

F. Control over Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and police and judicial cooperation

The Parliament is entitled to be kept informed in these areas and may address questions or recommendations to the Council. It must be consulted on the main aspects and basic choices of the common foreign and security policy and on any measure envisaged apart from the common positions on police and judicial cooperation. The implementation of an inter-institutional agreement on budgetary discipline and sound financial management has improved CFSP consultation procedures as far as financial aspects are concerned.

After the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty almost all aspects of police and judicial cooperation as well as other policies regarding justice and home affairs are subject to the ordinary legislative procedure (codecision). As to foreign policy, the creation of the new High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy should enhance Parliament's influence because, unlike under the previous arrangement, the new High Representative is also a Vice-President of the Commission over which Parliament has stronger scrutiny rights than vis-à-vis the Council to which the old High Representative was responsible. Furthermore, the budget of the new European External Action Service under the authority of the High Representative requires Parliament's approval.

G. Accountability of Commission and Council to Parliament

The Commission regularly submits reports to Parliament, such as:

- The Annual Commission Report on the Functioning of the Communities;
- The Annual Report on the Implementation of the Budget.

Presidents-in-office of the Council also present their programme to Parliament at the beginning of their presidency and report on the results achieved at the end of their mandate. Moreover, each EU summit begins with a declaration by the President of the European Parliament, setting out the institution's key positions on the subjects to be addressed by the Heads of State and Government. At the end of each summit, the President of the European Council presents a report to Parliament on its outcome and launches a debate with the Members of the European Parliament.

The Treaty of Lisbon enshrines legislative power and introduces a hierarchy of norms in the Union's legal order. A clear distinction is now made between legislative acts and all other acts (non-legislative acts), a legislative act being defined as a legal act adopted by legislative procedure. Each individual legal basis in the Treaties identifies whether or not an act is of a legislative nature.

To avoid making EU legislation over-complicated and technical, the Lisbon Treaty introduced a system for delegating to the Commission limited powers to adopt non-legislative acts in view of supplementing or amending certain non-essential elements of the legislative act, for example in order to update legislation. Parliament and Council must explicitly define the objective, content, scope, conditions and duration of that delegation.

The Treaty foresees two ways in which such delegation can be made conditional and each delegating act has to specify which of the two is foreseen: a) either the delegation can be repealed entirely by Council or Parliament, or b) Parliament or Council can object to a delegated act adopted by Commission within a specified period in which case the delegated act would be void. Parliament can take either decision with a majority of its Members while in the Council Qualified Majority Voting applies.

Similarly, before the Lisbon Treaty (and still applying to the implementation of legislative acts adopted before Lisbon), Parliament in 2006 had obtained the power to object to certain implementing acts, considered to be quasi-legislative, taken by the Commission (and endorsed by a committee of experts nominated by the Member States) in areas where codecision applied for the underlying legislation. This system is referred to as the Regulatory Procedure with Scrutiny.

2.4 Appeals to the European Court of Justice

Importantly, Parliament has the right to institute proceedings before the Court of Justice in cases of violation of the treaties by another institution.

Parliament has the **right to intervene**, i.e. to support one of the parties to the proceedings, in cases before the Court. It exercised this right in the landmark 'Isoglucose' judgement in which the Court declared a Council regulation invalid because Council had breached the obligation to consult Parliament.

In an **action for failure to act**, Parliament may institute proceedings against another EU institution before the Court for violation of the Treaty.

Under the Treaty of Amsterdam, the Parliament could bring an **action to annul an act** of another institution only for the purpose of protecting its prerogatives. But, since the Treaty of Nice, Parliament does not have to demonstrate a specific concern and therefore is able to institute proceedings in the same way as the Council, the Commission and the Member States.

The Parliament may be the defending party in an action against an act adopted under the codecision procedure or when one of its acts is intended to produce legal effects vis-à-vis third parties.

It is able to seek a **prior opinion** from the Court of Justice on the compatibility of an international agreement with the Treaties.

3

3. Members of the European Parliament (MEPs)

3.1 Elections and mandate

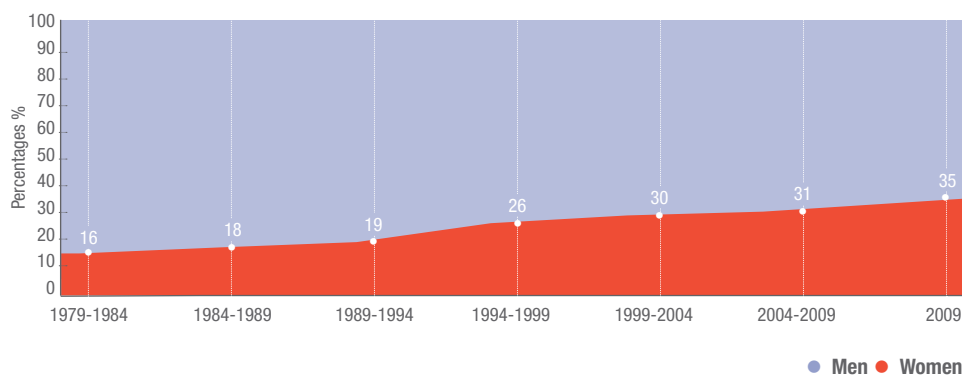
Each Member State decides on the form its election will take, but follows identical democratic rules: Elections shall be by direct universal suffrage and shall be free and secret. Other common standards include proportional representation and the right to vote and stand for election in the EU country of residence while having the nationality of another EU country and under the same conditions as nationals of that country.

As noted above, the distribution of seats among Member States is such that it is digressively proportional to the population of each Member State, meaning that MEPs from bigger states represent more citizens than those from smaller states. This is to allow for a representation of the main political leanings in the smaller countries within the European Parliament (which would not be the case if they were to elect only one or two MEPs).

Unlike previous treaties, the Lisbon Treaty no longer regulates the number of seats for each country but rather leaves this to be dealt with by a subsequent legal act to be adopted by the European Council, acting upon a proposal of the Parliament and requiring its consent. The Treaty fixes, however, an upper limit of 751 Members and stipulates that the smallest Member State shall elect no fewer than six and the biggest no more than 96 Members.

The proportion of women in the European Parliament has risen steadily and, since the June 2009 elections, they constitute about 35% of MEPs.

Distribution of men and women



By virtue of the provisions of the **Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the European Communities**, Members may not be subject to any form of inquiry, detention or legal prosecution in respect of opinions expressed or votes cast by them in the performance of their duties. During plenary part-sessions, Members enjoy in their country the immunities accorded to Members of their national parliament, and, in the territory of other Member States, exemption from any measure of detention or legal proceedings.

Members of the European Parliament exercise their mandate independently, meaning that they cannot be bound by any instructions or receive a binding mandate. Members are entitled to an appropriate salary to safeguard their independence. In 2009 a common salary was introduced for MEPs paid from the EU Budget (previously salaries equated to those of Members of national parliaments and were paid from national budgets).

Incompatibilities: Since 2009 no MEP can at the same time be a member of a national parliament (for most countries this provision already applied from 2004) or of a national government. The office of an MEP is also incompatible with that of a Commissioner and a series of other high EU offices (such as judge at the European Court of Justice, Board Member of the Central Bank, etc.).

3.2 Duties: legislative work

When the European Commission, the principal institution empowered to initiate legislation, presents a proposal for a 'legislative text', a Member of the European Parliament draws up a report in one of the EP's 20 standing committees. The parliamentary committee votes on this report which normally includes amendments to the legislative proposal. Parliament has adopted its position when the text has been revised and adopted in plenary. This process is repeated one or more times, depending on the type of procedure and whether or not agreement is reached with the Council at an early stage.

The right to vote is a personal right. Each Member votes individually and personally.

Votes are taken by a show of hands or electronically. Roll call votes are foreseen for a number of specific cases in the rules of procedure (including the final vote on a legislative proposal) and can be requested by 40 members jointly or by a political group. Secret votes are foreseen namely for elections to specific offices and can be requested beforehand by one fifth of Parliament's Members.

3.2.1 Parliamentary committees

In order to do the preparatory work for Parliament's plenary sittings, Members are divided up among a number of specialised standing committees. In the legislative period 2004-2009, there were 20 parliamentary committees and two subcommittees. This arrangement has been maintained since the 2009 elections (see table below). In addition, one special committee on *Organised crime, corruption and money laundering* was set up in March 2012 and started work in July 2012. Special committees dealing with the financial and economic crisis, and the future financial resources of the EU, concluded their work in June 2011.

Committees in the European Parliament (7th legislature)

AFET	Foreign Affairs	IMCO	Internal Market and Consumer Protection
DROI	Human Rights subcommittee	TRAN	Transport and Tourism
SEDE	Security and Defence subcommittee	REGI	Regional Development
DEVE	Development	AGRI	Agriculture and Rural Development
INTA	International Trade	PECH	Fisheries
BUDG	Budgets	CULT	Culture and Education
CONT	Budgetary Control	JURI	Legal Affairs
ECON	Economic and Monetary Affairs	LIBE	Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
EMPL	Employment and Social Affairs	AFCO	Constitutional Affairs
ENVI	Environment, Public Health and Food Safety	FEMM	Women's Rights and Gender Equality
ITRE	Industry, Research and Energy	PETI	Petitions
		CRIM	Organised crime, corruption and money laundering (Special committee)

A. Composition of parliamentary committees

Committees reflect the political make-up of the plenary assembly. EP committees currently consist of between 24 (Fisheries) and 76 (Foreign Affairs) members. Each committee has a chair, a bureau and is assisted by a secretariat. The committee chairs coordinate the work of the committees in the Conference of Committee Chairs. The parliamentary committees meet once or twice a month in Brussels and their debates are usually held in public. The committees draw up, amend and adopt legislative proposals and own-initiative reports. They consider Commission and Council proposals and, where necessary, draw up reports to be presented to the plenary. Parliament can also set up subcommittees and temporary committees to deal with specific issues, and committees of inquiry, under its supervisory remit.

B. Procedure and role of the secretariat

For each procedure the President appoints one committee as the committee responsible and, where appropriate, requests one or more committees to deliver opinions. Each committee appoints a rapporteur or a draftsman (in the case of an opinion) whose task is to draft the report/opinion with the assistance of the committee secretariat. The secretariat facilitates contacts with other institutions and interested parties, makes the necessary arrangements to ensure a smooth passage through committee of the text in question and, with the assistance of the central 'Tabling Office', advises the rapporteur on all procedural questions and provides assistance in drafting texts.

Members appointed as rapporteur (preparing a report for the lead committee) or draftsman (preparing an opinion by another committee) are also supported in their task by the EP's policy departments (providing parliamentary research and background briefings) and by their own political group secretariats. The committee secretariat makes sure that texts submitted are in the correct form, translated into all languages and distributed to all members of the committee. The draft report or draft opinion is then put on the agenda for a committee meeting for an exchange of views. Following the exchange of views on a proposal, the chair of the committee sets a deadline for the tabling of amendments by the other committee members.

3.2.2 Delegations

Parliament maintains regular contact with nearly a hundred parliaments of non-EU countries. These contacts take the form of inter-parliamentary meetings which play an important role in exchanging information and helping to develop Europe's external relations. Each delegation has full and substitute members. Inter-parliamentary meetings are held twice a year, alternately in one of Parliament's places of work and in a place decided by the partner parliament in the non-EU country concerned.

Parliament sets up standing inter-parliamentary delegations on a proposal from the Conference of Presidents and decides on their nature and the number of their members, bearing in mind their duties. Currently there are 41 delegations of varying sizes (see p. 145). The delegation chairs coordinate the work of the delegations in the Conference of Delegation Chairs. The Conference of Delegation Chairs makes recommendations to the Conference of Presidents concerning the proceedings of the delegations with particular reference to the specific provisions governing their work and their calendar of activities. The calendar of parliamentary meetings is adopted annually by the Conference of Presidents.

There are several types of delegation:

- Inter-parliamentary delegations, whose task is to maintain relations with the parliaments of countries outside the European Union that have not applied for membership;
- Joint parliamentary committees, which maintain contact with the parliaments of countries that are candidates for accession to the European Union and with countries which have association agreements with the EU;
- EP Delegations to Multilateral Assemblies:
 - Delegation to the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly;
 - Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean;
 - Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly;
 - Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly;
 - Delegation for relations with the Pan-African Parliament;
 - Delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

3.2.3 Relations with national parliaments

Over the years, the Parliament has developed a close network of relations with the parliaments of the EU Member States via:

- regular conferences and meetings between its President and the presidents of the national parliaments;
- meetings and roundtables between Parliament's committees and their national counterparts;
- meetings between parliamentarians on topics of general interest;
- meetings of the Conference of European Community Affairs Committees (COSAC) which comprises a six-member European Parliament delegation (appointed by the Conference of Presidents and led by the two Vice-Presidents with responsibility for relations with national parliaments) and delegations from the European affairs committees of the national parliaments of the EU.

The Lisbon Treaty provides that draft legislative acts are also sent to national parliaments and that national parliaments can, within eight weeks, issue a reasoned opinion if it considers that the proposed act breaches the principle of subsidiarity, meaning that the EU would be overstepping its competences if it were to adopt the act because the subject matter could be dealt with better at a lower level (national, regional or local). Parliament's Rules of Procedure define in detail how the European Parliament deals with these kinds of reasoned opinions and foresee that the committee dealing with the proposal concerned duly takes these into account and may propose

amendments to remedy the concerns expressed by national parliaments or recommend rejection of the proposal if a majority of national parliaments have issued reasoned opinions. Rule 38a on the “Examination of respect for the principle of subsidiary” also stipulates that the responsible committee shall not vote on the proposal before the end of the examination period provided for national parliaments. Responsibility for examining the respect of the subsidiary principle within the EP has been attributed to the Legal Affairs committee. Sixty-four Reasoned Opinions were issued by national parliaments (or a chamber of a national parliament) in 2011. However, whereas some chambers did not issue Reasoned Opinions at all, the Swedish *Riksdag* alone was responsible for 11 such opinions, followed by Luxembourg’s *Chambre des Députés* which issued seven.³

3.3 Salary and allowances of the Members

Up until the elections in June 2009, MEPs received the same salary as the Members of Parliament in the country where they were elected. However, a Statute for Members of the European Parliament adopted in September 2005 entered into force with the new parliamentary term in 2009, introducing a common salary for MEPs. MEPs’ remuneration is calculated as a percentage (38.5%) of the basic salary of a judge at the European Court of Justice. As an indication, and with the currently available data, the gross salary is € 7 956.87 and, after deduction of taxes and social security contributions, the net amount is € 6 200.72. Apart from Community tax, which is deducted by Parliament, the Member States have the right to make the salary subject to national tax law provisions, provided that any double taxation is avoided. In addition to their salary, Members are entitled to various allowances whose payment is governed by the Bureau and which are set out in the **Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members of the European Parliament**. The Parliament Secretariat and, as a last resort, the College of Quaestors (a body comprising five MEPs responsible for administrative and financial matters concerning Members), are responsible for ensuring that these provisions are properly applied. These rules are forwarded to each Member at the beginning of their term of office who in turn must acknowledge receipt in writing. The regulations concerning their rights are also presented to the MEPs in the **Handbook for Members**.

Travel and subsistence expenses

Members are entitled to a **travel allowance and subsistence allowance** in respect of the days on which they attend meetings of official Parliament bodies (attested by their signature on the attendance register):

- Plenary part-session;
- Bureau;
- Conference of Presidents;
- Conference of Committee chairs;
- Conference of Delegation chairs;
- Committees;
- Inter-parliamentary delegations;
- Political groups;
- other missions authorised by the Conference of Presidents.

Travel expenses

Members are entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses they actually incur.

3 For details see Annex 1 of the European Commission’s Annual Report 2011 on Relations with National Parliaments, COM(2012) 375 final, 10.7.2012

Members are entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred when travelling to and from Parliament's places of work or venues for meetings of Parliament's bodies (see above), or in connection with specific missions for which travel is authorised by the Bureau, the Conference of Presidents or the President. The purpose of such travel must be to participate in official activities taking place on the days set aside for them in Parliament's official calendar of business, or on the days fixed by the body authorising a specific mission.

The above travel expenses are reimbursed on the basis of a Member's attendance as attested by their signature on the record of attendance made available to Members by the secretariats of Parliament's official bodies, the central attendance register or the record of attendance available in the Chamber during part-sessions.

Travel expenses are also reimbursed in respect of journeys made between two places of work and/or meeting venues of Parliament in order to participate in official activities taking place there.

Members are entitled to 24 return journeys within their Member State of election by air, rail or boat per calendar year. They are also entitled to make a certain number of journeys by car, up to a specified distance depending on the size of their country. Reimbursement is based on the expenses actually incurred and is limited to business class air travel and first class train/boat travel by the most direct route at the fare available from Parliament's travel agency and to € 0.49/km for travel by car.

Within the limit of the annual amount fixed for this purpose (currently € 4 243 for the whole year), Members are entitled to reimbursement of travel expenses actually incurred as a result of their participation, outside their Member State of election, in activities strictly and exclusively connected with the performance of their duties. Members must complete the application for reimbursement of travel expenses, attaching a programme or an invitation justifying that the travel was undertaken in the performance of their duties, and the supporting documents.

Subsistence allowance

(a) Members are entitled to a flat-rate allowance (€ 304 /day) for participation in official meetings of Parliament's bodies taking place within the European Union. This allowance is intended to cover accommodation expenses and meals, as well as any other expenses incurred during the stay. During plenary part-sessions, the subsistence allowance is halved for Members who have taken part in less than half the roll-call votes.

(b) For meetings outside the European Union, this daily allowance is reduced by half, but reasonable hotel and breakfast expenses are borne by Parliament. The subsistence allowance is paid in hourly instalments for the period between the time of departure and the time of return. Members must complete and submit the appropriate form provided.

General expenditure allowance

Members are entitled to a monthly fixed sum allowance of currently € 4 299 which is mainly intended to cover office management expenditure, book-keeping, phone bills, postage, the purchase, management and use of IT equipment, travel by Members within their own country, and the organising of public meetings and events. The allowance is paid at the Member's request.

Members who, without valid reason, have not taken part in half the part-session days will be required to repay 50% of the allowance. Where absence from a part-session is justified on grounds of ill-health or serious family circumstances, supporting documents must be sent to the Quaestors no later than two months from the end of the period of absence.

Parliamentary assistance allowance

Each Member is entitled to a monthly parliamentary assistance allowance (maximum of € 21 209) to cover expenses arising out of the employment or use of the services of one or more assistants whom the Member may choose at their discretion; several Members may jointly engage or employ the services of a single assistant.

Members may form a *de facto* grouping with a view to sharing the services of one or more assistants. They must draw up an agreement establishing such a grouping and containing, *inter alia*, the name of the Member authorised to sign in the name of and on behalf of the grouping, and the name of their substitute. This agreement must be attached to the recruitment request(s).

There are two categories of assistant:

- ‘Accredited assistants’, who are based in one of Parliament’s places of work and fall within the scope of the ‘Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Communities’. Accredited assistants are recruited by Parliament at the express request of the Member(s) whom they are to assist. Their contracts are concluded and administered directly by Parliament; in October 2012 there were 1 660 accredited assistants working for MEPs.
- ‘Local assistants’, who are based in the Member’s Member State of election and fall within the scope of Chapter V of the Implementing Measures for the Statute for Members. Local assistants can be employees or self-employed persons (service providers). In either case they conclude a contract with the Member directly – hence there is no legal or administrative link with Parliament, save for the fact that Parliament pays the salary or fees on behalf of the Member.

The maximum amount which can be defrayed in respect of services provided by service providers may not exceed 25% of the allowance to which each Member is entitled each month (excluding the paying agent’s fee). Within this limit, Members can also make use of services offered by legal persons, such as companies, provided that these services are well defined, are directly and exclusively linked to their mandate and are not related to the provision of human resources.

Members are also entitled to have trainees, in accordance with the conditions laid down by the Bureau. Expenses in relation to traineeships can be paid from the parliamentary assistance allowance.

Local assistants’ contracts must be managed by a paying agent – i.e. a natural or legal person authorised under national law to manage the administrative aspects of contracts, such as taking care of taxes, social security and other charges relating to assistants, and preparing at regular intervals the documents which must be submitted to Parliament in order to regularise the expenses incurred by Members in employing their parliamentary assistants. The paying agent must ensure that national and Community law is properly complied with in respect of the contracts it manages.

Accredited assistants must declare financial or family interests that may constitute a conflict of interest and they may carry out outside assignments only after Parliament’s approval. Members may not employ spouses, or other stable non-marital partners, siblings or their children as assistants.

3.4 Social entitlements and training facilities

Social entitlements

MEPs enjoy different insurances. They are covered against the risk of accidents both in the performance of their duties and in their private life. They benefit from life assurance and an insurance against loss and theft when exercising their parliamentary duties.

Members are covered against the risks of loss or theft on days when they are in receipt of a daily subsistence allowance from the European Parliament.

All Members, and under certain conditions, members of their families, are entitled to reimbursement of two thirds of their **medical expenses**. Some treatments are subject to a ceiling for reimbursement and prior authorisation. There is also provision for direct billing of hospital costs. MEPs may take out additional, private, non-compulsory medical insurance to cover the remainder of any medical expenses which they have to pay. They are responsible for paying the contributions for such cover.

Members who receive a salary from the Parliament and who retire after they have served at least one year are entitled to an **old-age pension** payable from the age of 63. It is calculated on the basis of the salary calculation and the length of the Member's term of office. The pension is 3.5% of salary for each complete year served, and one twelfth of that sum for each additional month, but may not exceed 70%. Apart from an EU tax, which is deducted by Parliament, the Member States have the right to make the pension subject to national tax law provisions, provided that any double taxation is avoided.

Members who, during their term of office, have been recognised as suffering from total **invalidity** preventing them from performing their duties, and who resign as a result, are entitled to an invalidity pension.

Training facilities

MEPs may make use of the following language and computer facilities:

– **Language courses**

A maximum amount of € 5 000 per year is made available to Members to cover the tuition fees incurred. Members and assistants may participate in language courses in Brussels organised for officials by the Professional Training Unit;

– **Computer courses**

Up to a maximum amount of € 1 500 per year, Members and/or their accredited assistants may attend computer courses in the Member State in which the Member was elected or in one of Parliament's normal places of work. Members and their assistants may attend computer courses organised by the Professional Training Unit in Parliament's normal places of work.

Parliament reimburses tuition fees to Members on presentation of the invoice, proof of payment and a certificate stating the content, dates, number of hours and the timetables of the courses attended.

3.5 Code of Conduct for Members

Europe has seen a growing interest in parliamentary ethics since the 1990s. Greater media scrutiny, increased public access to official information and a number of prominent scandals have all forced politicians to clean up their act – or incur the wrath of their voters. Citizens expect the public sector, including holders of public office, to operate efficiently and transparently and to adhere to the highest standards of integrity.

The European Commission introduced a code of conduct for its Members following a 1999 corruption scandal which brought down the entire Commission and has updated it twice since. By contrast, there was no similar, stand-alone code for MEPs until a lobbying scandal in 2011 forced a major rethink, when a newspaper revealed that several MEPs had apparently been prepared to accept bribes in return for tabling amendments to legislative reports.

In response, Parliament's President called for the introduction of a code of conduct for MEPs, and a working group was set up which produced a draft Code of Conduct that was approved by the Parliament's Conference of Presidents and then formally adopted by the EP in plenary on 1 December 2011. The new Code entered into force on 1 January 2012 and has become Annex 1 of the EP's Rules of Procedure.

In its opening principles, the Code of Conduct states that "In exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament: (a) are guided by and observe the following general principles of conduct: disinterest, integrity, openness, diligence, honesty, accountability and respect for Parliament's reputation, (b) act solely in the public interest and refrain from obtaining or seeking to obtain any direct or indirect financial benefit or other reward."

The Code describes in Article 2 the main duties of Members (such as not to solicit or receive any financial benefits for voting behaviour), explains what constitutes conflict of interest and how to address it when it arises (Art. 3). The Code describes in detail what and how financial interests must be declared (Art. 5) and contains provisions that former Members who are working in a lobbying capacity shall not benefit from any facilities normally granted by the EP to its former Members (Art. 6). Article 7 foresees the setting up of an advisory committee to provide guidance to Members and to the President on the interpretation of the Code and on potential breaches. This Advisory Committee started its work in March 2012; it is composed of leading Members of Parliament's Constitutional Affairs and Legal Affairs Committees. The Bureau of Parliament is to adopt where necessary implementing rules and an ad-hoc working group of the Bureau has started its work.

- › The full text of the Code of Conduct is reproduced in the annex of the Guide. The OPPD has also published a booklet "Parliamentary Ethics - A Question of Trust" which provides further details and also looks into how different national parliaments in Europe deal with related issues.

3.6 Political groups and their secretariats

Formation and legal status of the political groups

The Members of the European Parliament do not sit within national groups in Parliament, but rather in political groups according to political affiliation. A minimum number of 25 MEPs from at least one quarter of the Member States is required to form a political group. Usually political groups are formed or re-established after elections but in theory groups can be formed (or

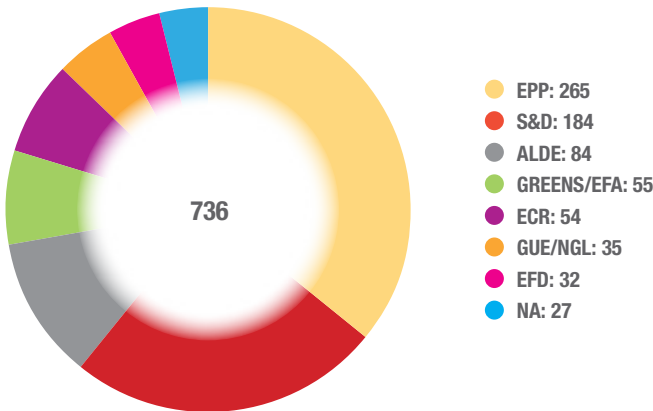
disbanded) at any time during the legislature. Members may not belong to more than one political group. MEPs who do not belong to any group are known as ‘non-attached’.

Before every vote in plenary the political groups scrutinise the reports drawn up by the parliamentary committees and table amendments to them. The position adopted by the political group is reached by discussion within the group. No Member can be forced to vote in a particular way.

After the 2009 elections, seven political groups were formed within the European Parliament. As in the previous term, the European People’s Party were the biggest group with the centre-left S&D group second and the Liberals third. Two new groups were established: the European Conservatives and Reformists, and the Europe of Freedom and Democracy Group.

The EP’s political groups at the beginning of the 7th legislature (2009-2014)

Incoming Parliament (Constituent) – 2009



EPP	European People’s Party (Christian Democrats)
S&D	Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats
ALDE	Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
Greens/EFA	Greens/European Free Alliance
ECR	European Conservatives and Reformists
GUE/NGL	European United Left/ Nordic Green Left
EFD	Europe of Freedom and Democracy

Organisation

The Rules of Procedure require political groups to notify the President of their title, the names of their members and the membership of their bureau when they are set up. They normally draw up their organisational arrangements by adopting internal rules of procedure and/or statutes. Although structured in different ways, all the political groups have a chair, several vice-chairs, a bureau (and in most cases a treasurer) and a secretariat.

Duties

The political groups play an important part in the organisation and decision-making of Parliament. Their functions include:

- appointing the members of the committees and inter-parliamentary delegations;
- through their chair, calling for a sitting to be suspended or closed, or for a roll call vote;
- tabling amendments and resolutions for consideration in plenary.

Each political group divides up the speaking time assigned to it for each sitting on a pro rata basis according to the number of its Members. The groups endeavour to reach agreement on the membership of Parliament's various bodies so as to ensure balanced representation.

Administrative support

Each political group has a secretariat, whose temporary staff it is free to appoint, with costs covered by Parliament's budget. The number and grades of staff are determined by the number of Members and the spread of languages within the group. Members not belonging to any political group also have a secretariat, the cost of whose temporary staff is paid from Parliament's budget. The number and grades of staff are decided by Parliament's Bureau.

3.7 Financing of the political groups

How are the activities of the political groups financed?

Political groups are financed entirely from the budget of the European Parliament. The appropriations made available to the groups originate from a special budget item and are subject to rules laid down by the Bureau of the Parliament.

These appropriations can be used for: administrative and operational expenditure of the secretariat of the groups, and expenditure on political and information activities in connection with the European Union activity. The appropriations cannot be used for: paying expenditure already covered by other budget items; financing election campaigns; acquiring immovable property or financing political parties at European level.

The total budget is allocated at the beginning of each year by the Bureau, based on the number of Members in the groups (and that of the non-attached Members) and the number of languages represented. Once assigned, the appropriations are transferred into the groups' accounts. Changes in the composition of the groups (and non-attached Members) result in a re-allocation on a quarterly basis.

Unused appropriations, up to a maximum of 50% of the annual amount received, may be carried over to the following financial year. Amounts exceeding this limit must be repaid to the European Parliament.

The groups themselves, represented by their chair, are responsible for the use of the appropriations. They keep their accounts independent from those of the Parliament and must be audited annually by auditors from a list approved by the Parliament.

The audited reports must be submitted to the President of the Parliament by the end of April. The Bureau and the Committee on Budgetary Control decide whether the groups have or have not complied with the rules. The audited reports are published on the Parliament's website.

4

4. Political management of the EP

The functioning of the European Parliament is laid down in the official *Rules of Procedure* which determines the composition and duties of the governing bodies.

4.1 Role of the President

The **President** is elected for a term of two and a half years, i.e. half the legislature (the term is in theory renewable but this has never happened in practice).

The President represents the European Parliament vis-à-vis the outside world and in its relations with the other Community institutions. The President's formal duties are stipulated in article 20 of Rules of Procedures and some of the subsequent rules dealing with the different parliamentary bodies in which the President has a role.

- The President chairs the plenary sittings of Parliament, the Conference of the Presidents of Political Groups (seven in number) and the Bureau of Parliament (including 14 Vice-Presidents).
- The President ensures that Parliament's Rules of Procedure are adhered to and, through his arbitration, guarantees that all the activities of the institution and its constituent bodies run smoothly.
- The President is the representative of Parliament in legal affairs and in all external relations. They deliver an opinion on all major international issues and makes recommendations designed to strengthen the European Union.
- At the beginning of every European Council meeting (summit of the EU heads of state and government) the President of the European Parliament sets out Parliament's point of view and its concerns as regards the items on the agenda and other subjects.
- The President of the Parliament and the President of the Council both sign all legislative acts adopted under codecision. After the European Union's budget has been adopted by Parliament, the President signs it, rendering it operational.

These and many other tasks involve the president in a wide variety of activities inside and outside the Parliament, some of which can be delegated.

The President is assisted by the Secretary-General of the European Parliament who advises on administrative, financial and organisational matters. As the most senior official of the EP, the Secretary-General actively participates in meetings with the Secretaries-General of political groups in order to prepare the meetings of the Conference of Presidents.

The President is also assisted in their duties and responsibilities by a cabinet or private office, which includes a spokesperson and several advisers of various nationalities and languages. Members of the cabinet are drawn from political group staff, Parliament's civil servants or from outside. Most cabinets contain a mix of all three.

4.2 Conference of Presidents

Composition of the Conference of Presidents

The Conference of Presidents consists of the EP President and the chairs of the political groups. The Conference of Presidents endeavours to reach a consensus on matters referred to it. Where a consensus cannot be reached, the matter is put to a vote subject to a weighting based on the size of each political group.

Duties of the Conference of Presidents

The Conference of Presidents (CoP) is responsible for the broad **political direction** of the parliament, both internally and externally.

Internally, it proposes the composition and competence of committees, committees of inquiry and joint parliamentary committees, standing delegations and ad hoc delegations. The Conference of Presidents adjudicates on disputes of competences between committees and authorises the drafting of reports. The Conference of Presidents takes decisions on the organisation of Parliament's work and matters relating to legislative planning. The week before the plenary session it decides on the draft agenda which can sometimes give rise to lively discussions between the political leaders.

Externally, the Conference of Presidents decides on matters concerning relations with the other institutions and bodies of the European Union and with the national parliaments of Member States. It is the authority responsible for matters pertaining to relations with non-member countries and with non-Union institutions and organisations.

The CoP, as the most important political body after the plenary, often receives distinguished guests and representatives for an exchange of views. A few notable examples include meetings with President Nicolas Sarkozy, the Dalai Lama, Leyla Zana, presidents of non-EU countries, presidents of parliaments of Member States, etc.

In addition, the CoP meets with representatives from the Commission, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and other bodies and institutions.

The Conference of Presidents submits proposals to the Bureau concerning administrative and budgetary matters relating to the political groups. It also authorises the drawing up of own-initiative reports.

The CoP usually meets twice a month. Its meetings are prepared by secretaries-general of the political groups together with the EP Secretary-General. Attendance at the CoP is limited to leaders of the political groups and their secretaries-generals and the Parliament's Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General. On the staff side attendance is usually restricted to members of the President's Cabinet, the Cabinet of the Secretary-General, Directors-General of the EP, officials of the CoP Secretariat and a limited number of political group staff.

4.3 Bureau

Composition of the Bureau

The Bureau consists of the President and the 14 Vice-Presidents of the European Parliament. The five Quaestors hold observer status in the Bureau and have an advisory function on administrative and financial matters of direct concern to MEPs.

Duties of the Bureau

The Bureau guides the Parliament's internal functioning. The Rules of Procedure stipulate that the Bureau takes decisions on financial, organisational and administrative matters concerning Members and the internal organisation of Parliament, its Secretariat and its bodies. Under its financial responsibilities, the Bureau draws up the preliminary version of the EP budget.

The Bureau deals also with staff policy (establishment plan of the Secretariat and regulations relating to the administrative and financial situation of officials and other servants) and management of sittings. The Bureau is the authority responsible for authorising committee meetings outside the usual places of work, hearings, and study and fact-finding missions by rapporteurs. Nearly every Bureau meeting agenda contains such requests. Building and security policy have also become important decision-making areas of the Bureau over recent years.

The Bureau often convenes small working groups to prepare or monitor and develop complex and/or sensitive dossiers (working group on reform of EP; working group on Members' Statute; working group on communication policy etc.).

It has become a practice that the 14 Vice-Presidents are assigned specific responsibilities by the President. These responsibilities may be geographic, thematic or related to specific tasks or important projects which the Bureau wishes to monitor. There are for example three Vice-Presidents who regularly head Parliament's delegations to the Conciliation Committee which is convened to negotiate a compromise between Council and Parliament if no consensus can be reached in the second reading of the Ordinary Legislative Procedure. Other Vice-Presidents follow relations with specific world regions or international organisations, Parliament's communication policy, IT development, buildings policy, gender issues or budgetary matters, to name just some examples.

The Bureau-appointed Secretary-General plays a very important role in the preparation of the Bureau agenda in addition to contributing to discussions on budgetary issues, staff policy and building policy. The Secretary-General advises the President on matters related to financial, organisational and administrative management.

The Bureau is assisted by a Secretariat unit which prepares notes, drafts minutes and assists in the preparation of follow-up to the implementation of decisions.

4.4 Conference of Committee Chairs

The Conference of Committee Chairs is the political body of the European Parliament consisting of the Chairs of all parliamentary committees. It monitors the progress of work in committees, ensures cooperation and coordination between parliamentary committees in their legislative and non-legislative activities, and examines issues of common interest.

The Conference of Committee Chairs plays an important role in Parliament's interaction with other institutions, notably the Commission, by coordinating internal and **inter-institutional legislative programming**.

The Conference:

- Prepares Parliament's contribution to the Commission's annual legislative and work programme and monitors its implementation on a regular basis;
- Meets several times a year with the Council Presidency to discuss priorities and review the work in progress within the Council;

- Submits to the Conference of Presidents a monthly recommendation concerning the draft agenda of the next part-session, as well as a 3-monthly recommendation on priority debates in plenary.

The Conference of Committee Chairs also plays a key role as a **mediator** between parliamentary committees in relation to a request from one committee to be closely associated to the planned report of another committee and by contributing to the settlement of conflicts of competence among committees. It also deals with requests to draw up own-initiative reports, draft annual programmes of committee hearings and committee delegations, and allocation of expertise budgets to committees.

Last but not least, the Conference of Committee Chairs is the body in which parliamentary committees exchange information, experiences and best practices on all – internal or inter-institutional – political and procedural aspects of their daily activities, such as for instance the implementation of the Interinstitutional Agreement on Better Lawmaking.

In the past, the Conference of Committee Chairs adopted various guidelines, handbooks and stock-taking reports on horizontal issues such as the use of expertise budgets, the use of impact assessments, comitology, budget and legislative programming, transposition of Community law, etc.

The Chair of the Conference of Committee Chairs is elected by the committee Chairs for a period of two and a half years. They are invited to attend the meetings of the Conference of Presidents in an advisory capacity. The Conference of Committee Chairs may make recommendations to the Conference of Presidents about the work of committees and the drafting of the agenda of part-sessions. The Bureau and the Conference of Presidents may consult the Conference of Committee Chairs and may also request specific tasks from it.

The Conference of Committee Chairs meets once a month: it is authorised to meet from 2pm to 4pm on Tuesday afternoons during part-sessions in Strasbourg. The CCC meetings are normally not public. At the invitation of the CCC Chair, the Commission and Council may attend the deliberations of the Conference of Committee Chairs on the draft agenda of the next plenary session as well as on the requests for own-initiative reports.

4.5 Agenda

The European Parliament operates to a strict timetable which is illustrated on a colour-coded calendar, with each colour corresponding to a different type of parliamentary activity.

Pink weeks for parliamentary committees

The European Parliament has 20 standing committees, each specialising in a particular field such as the environment, transport, industry or the budget (see above). The composition of these committees reflects the political trends in Parliament as a whole and the number of MEPs varies from committee to committee.

In committee meetings, MEPs collect information in hearings, hold debates and vote on reports, thereby expressing their opinion on proposed laws or on the draft EU budget for the following year. They draw up ‘own-initiative reports’ in which they recommend action to be taken in a particular area by the Commission or Member State governments.

Red weeks for plenary sessions

The plenary session is the focal point of the parliamentary month. This is when all MEPs assemble in the chamber in Strasbourg or for additional, shorter part-sessions, in Brussels. The

reports adopted in committee are once again debated, amended and put to the vote to set out Parliament's official position. Other than reports, MEPs adopt resolutions and directly question Commission or Council representatives on topical issues. Plenary sessions may be attended by heads of state and eminent individuals from across the world.

Blue weeks for political groups

MEPs form groups on the basis of political affiliation rather than nationality. During 'group weeks', which are generally the week before plenary sessions, each political group coordinates and formulates the positions it will take in the assembly on each of the subjects on the agenda.

Turquoise weeks: MEPs in their constituency or on external visits

A number of weeks a year are set aside for MEPs to return to their constituency to deal with local matters and meet their electorate, or to travel on official parliamentary business to other parts of the world. During these weeks no meetings are scheduled in Brussels or Strasbourg.



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④	3	10	17	24	31		7	14	21	28		7	14	21	28	
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5

5. Parliament's Administration

MEPs and Parliament are assisted by a comprehensive administration. The Secretariat has the task of coordinating the legislative work and organising plenary sittings and other meetings. It consists of around 5 700 people who work in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg and in the information offices. In addition to the non-partisan staff of the General Secretariat, the seven political groups employ slightly more than 900 people. If one adds the nearly 1 700 parliamentary assistants (employed individually by MEPs but paid by the EP), about 8 300 people keep Parliament's wheels turning.

5.1 The EP's organisational management is adapted to the EP's work

The General Secretariat of the European Parliament serves the Members of Parliament and supports them on a daily basis. Every time there is a change in the decision-making process of the European Union and when the European Parliament's powers are extended, the administrative structure is adapted accordingly.

This section will describe the organisational chart of the General Secretariat and reflect on its evolving structure that is aimed at serving MEPs in the most efficient way.

5.2 The EP secretariat's organisational chart

The Secretary-General is the highest official within the Parliament and is appointed by the Bureau. Since 1952, there have only been seven Secretaries-General.

The central unit of organisation of the Parliament is the Directorate-General (DG). Directorates-General are divided into Directorates which are themselves divided into Units, the basic operational and organisational structures. In 2011 the EP secretariat was composed of 37 Directorates and 233 units.

Before 1973, there were only four DGs, a number that has now risen to 10 plus Parliament's Legal Service. DG Presidency (DG PRES), DG Internal Policies (DG IPOL), DG External Policies (DG EXPO) and DG Communication (DG COMM) deal with the policy aspects of the European Parliament's work. The other DGs take care of the logistical tasks in the Parliament and its required resources (personnel, finance, etc.).

The following is a description of the main roles of the 10 Directorates-General (DGs).

DG for the Presidency (DG PRES)

DG PRES is responsible for the organisation of plenary sittings and for the follow-up of activities. It is in charge of:

- work associated with the Parliament's political activity involving the plenary sittings, inter-institutional legislative programming and Members' activities;
- assisting Members and the President with the legal-linguistic verification of texts, amendment of legislative texts and the admissibility of amendments, through the work of the Directorate for Legislative Acts;

- supporting Members' activities by providing Library services;
- relations with national parliaments; and
- practical but essential aspects of running a large organisation, such as protocol, the mail department, the transmission of documents, the register, archives and security.

DG PRES counts 33 units and is divided into seven Directorates, employing nearly 700 people: Directorate A for the Plenary Sessions, Directorate B for Legislative Acts, Directorate C for the Library and Document Management, Directorate D for Relations with National Parliaments, Directorate E for Security and Risk Assessment, Directorate F for Presidency Services and Directorate G for Resources Management.

DG for Internal Policies (DG IPOL)

DG IPOL is in charge of organising the work of Parliament's committees responsible for all policies concerned with EU internal matter (social and structural policy, agriculture and internal market, justice and home affairs, etc.) and for contributing to the exercise and development of the budgetary, legislative and supervisory powers of the European Parliament.

Its main responsibilities are:

- To ensure the smooth running of the legislative and non-legislative activities of parliamentary committees in the field of internal policies, primarily by providing the secretariat for 17 committees and 1 temporary committee;
- To ensure good coordination of Parliament's legislative activities, mainly through the Conference of Committee Chairs;
- To support Committee members and, in particular, the Committee Chairs and Rapporteurs, in the exercise of their duties;
- To provide Committees, other Parliamentary organs and the President's Office with briefings, background notes and long-term studies related to all aspects of the Parliament's activities in the field of internal policies;
- To help the committees to develop their work programmes in close cooperation with the Commission and Council;
- To promote and ensure coordination of all activities related to better law-making in the Parliament.

DG IPOL counts 32 units and is divided into seven Directorates: Directorate A Economic and Scientific Policies, Directorate B Structural and Cohesion Policies, Directorate C Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, Directorate D Budgetary Affairs, Directorate E Legislative Coordination and Conciliations, Directorate F Resources and Directorate G Impact Assessment. It consists of about 530 staff members.

DG for External Policies (DG EXPO)

The Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union (DG EXPO) provides the administrative support to all parliamentary bodies active in the field of foreign policy.

DG EXPO's activities are subdivided into the following strands:

- *Support to parliamentary committees in the field of external policies:* DG EXPO provides the secretariat for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Committee on Development and the Committee on International Trade plus the Subcommittee on Human Rights and the Subcommittee on Security and Defence established within the Committee on Foreign Affairs;
- *Support to delegations:* DG EXPO ensures the smooth running of the work of permanent delegations with parliaments outside the European Union. As such, it looks after the secretariat

tasks for a number of multilateral parliamentary bodies to which the EP is party, notably the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and the Parliamentary Conferences on the WTO;

- *External democracy support:* A Directorate for Democracy Support was set up in April 2012 following a decision by the Bureau. It incorporates a unit providing support to EP election observation missions, the Office for Promotion of Parliamentary Democracy (OPPD), a unit providing training and capacity building support to parliaments of South Eastern Europe (Western Balkans) and a unit for actions to promote Human Rights;
- *Policy Department:* The work of the parliamentary bodies is backed up by a small research unit which provides the committees and delegations as well as the President's Office with briefings and background notes and studies related to the EP's foreign policy activities.

DG EXPO counts 19 units within four Directorates: a Directorate for Committees, a Directorate for inter-parliamentary delegations and a Directorate for financial and human resources, and the Directorate for Democracy Support. With some 230 staff, it is one of the smaller Directorates-General in the European Parliament.

DG for Communication (DG COMM)

DG COMM's mission is to increase awareness and to promote and provide information on the role, decisions and activities of the European Parliament. To this end, it targets written, online and audiovisual media as well as national, regional and local media and accredited journalists in both Brussels and Strasbourg. It also operates via the *Information Offices* in each Member State to reach the specialised press, the general public and opinion leaders.

DG COMM counts 20 units at central level and Information Offices in each of the 27 Member States and comprises four Directorates: the Media Directorate (A), responsible for promoting coverage of the decisions and authorities of the EP in the press and media; the Information Offices Directorate (B), responsible for providing information for the public by means of the Information Offices in the capitals and a few other major cities within the EU Member States; the Directorate for Relations with Citizens (C), responsible for projecting and promoting the Parliament to citizens and opinion leaders; and Directorate D, Resources. In 2012 DG COMM employed around 660 personnel.

DG for Personnel (DG PERS)

The main role of DG PERS is *to manage*, in the broadest sense of the term, the *European Parliament's human resources*, including officials, group staff and other additional staff, in accordance with the staff regulations governing officials and other servants of the European Communities.

Its most important task is to successfully implement, monitor and, where necessary, improve the institution's staff policy while at the same time meeting the challenge of enlargement. DG PERS is committed to proactive human resources management policies allowing the services and individuals to realise their full potential and maximise their contribution to the fundamental missions of the institution.

DG PERS numbers 18 units and is divided into four Directorates: A. Human Resources Development, B. Administrative Management, C. Management of Support and Social Services, and D. Resources. DG PERS employs just under 420 people.

DG for Infrastructure and Logistics (DG INLO)

DG INLO's 17 units are organised into four Directorates whose main tasks are:

- The management of the buildings of the European Parliament in the three places of work and the Information Offices in the Member States, on both technical and administrative levels, as well as the equipment and infrastructure involved in the running of the above-mentioned buildings;
- The management of logistics services for Members and staff, such as office equipment and meeting rooms, purchases, transport, removals, message services, furniture, catering, supermarkets, etc.
- Contracts and procurement
- Buildings projects

Some 660 people are working in Directorate-General INLO.

DG for Translation (DG TRAD)

DG TRAD provides the European Parliament with translation, publication and distribution services for its written or electronic communication in the 23 official languages of the European Union.

The services of DG Translation play a crucial role not only in the legislative process, but also in ensuring the smooth and professional functioning of the European Parliament on a day-to-day basis. They guarantee the principle of equal treatment between all official languages in the EU and they allow all citizens to have direct access to information in their own language.

DG TRAD is responsible for

- translating documents out of and into the 23 official languages, thus providing EU citizens with immediate access to European texts and the opportunity to communicate with the institutions in their national language(s);
- supplying a translation service which ensures both quality and efficiency, keeping costs at an acceptable level;
- developing the appropriate IT tools and terminology databases to aid translators and integrating them into the workflow;
- revising documents translated outside Parliament and monitoring the quality of external translations.

Around 1 240 persons are working within DG TRAD which includes 34 units and three Directorates (Directorate A Support and Technological Services for Translation, Directorate B Translation, and Directorate C Resources).

DG for Interpretation and Conferences (DG INTE)

DG INTE's main tasks are:

- providing and managing interpretation services for all meetings organised by the European Parliament at the three places of work and elsewhere;
- providing Interpretation ad Personam service (IAP);
- managing meetings and rooms at the European Parliament;
- providing and managing conference technicians for all European Parliament meetings.

DG INTE employs 530 persons within three Directorates (Directorate A Interpretation, Directorate B Organisation and Planning, and Directorate C Resources) and a total of 36 units.

DG for Finance (DG FINS)

The duties of DG FINS are to:

- Draw up Parliament's budget, supervise its implementation, accompany the discharge procedure, keep and close the accounts and manage the treasury;
- Provide support, financial and budgetary assistance for all authorising officers in Parliament;
- Manage expenditure related to Members' allowances and social entitlements and implement financial support for political groups, European political parties and foundations and associations of former or current Members;
- Manage horizontal services for the benefit of the entire Parliament, such as the property inventory and the parliamentary travel office;
- Administer the Internal Audit Unit, which enjoys the functional autonomy guaranteed under the Financial Regulation.

DG FINS comprises ten units and is organised into three Directorates:

- A. Directorate for Budget and Financial Services;
- B. Directorate for Members' Financial and Social Entitlements; and
- C. Directorate for Political Structures Financing and other Services.

DG FINS counts just over 190 members of staff.

DG for Innovation and Technological support (DG ITEC)

DG ITEC *publishes and distributes* in electronic and hard-copy form official Parliament documents intended for Members. It publishes official EP documents in the Official Journal of the European Union. It is also responsible for Parliament's *Intranet service*. It is to ensure that IT equipment is kept up-to-date with the latest technology and is heavily involved in the development and implementation of environmental management standards (EMAS) in the EP.

DG ITEC's main tasks:

- Ensuring multilingual access at any time and from any place to all vital EP documents and data for users (Members, staff, public);
- Analysing, designing, developing and maintaining Parliament's IT systems for Members, political groups, and the services of the General Secretariat;
- Drawing up and ensuring compliance with a secure and viable technical strategy and defining all the various components of computing and telecommunications systems;
- Printing and distributing (also electronically) Parliament's working documents (committee meetings, plenary sittings, etc.);
- Publishing legislation and documents in the Official Journal (minutes, texts adopted, written questions, etc.) and producing other publications in cooperation with the Publications Office of the European Union.

DG ITEC was created in 2008 and is divided into three Directorates: the Directorate for Information Technologies (DIT), the Directorate for Publishing and Distribution and Directorate for Resources. The DG brings together some 440 staff counting 14 units and three Directorates.

Legal Service (JURI)

In a Union founded on the principles of democracy, the rule of law and respect for fundamental rights, the Legal Service plays a key role by advising Parliament on legal issues and representing it in legal proceedings.

In its advisory role, the Legal Service assists Parliament's political bodies (the President, the Bureau, the Conference of Presidents, the Quaestors and the parliamentary committees) and

its Secretariat. It delivers legal opinions on a completely independent basis. The rules governing referrals to the Legal Service are laid down by a Bureau decision of 28 January 2004.

As the scope of the codecision procedure (now ordinary legislative procedure) has broadened with each Treaty revision, the Legal Service has stepped up its support for the legislative work of the parliamentary committees, with the result that this activity now represents one of its primary tasks. In that connection, it is closely involved in the procedures for codifying, recasting and in reviewing the drafting quality of texts, alongside DG Presidency, DG IPOL and DG EXPO.

Furthermore, the Legal Service continues to devote an important part of its advisory work to administrative legal questions: Members' rights, staff cases, contractual rights and obligations of the institution, implementation of the budget, etc.

In connection with the Legal Service's role in litigation, its members – who are appointed as Parliament's agents, representing the institution – draw up applications and plead cases before the Court of Justice, the Court of First Instance and the Civil Service Tribunal of the European Communities. They also represent the Parliament before the national courts.

The legal service has grown substantially in importance since its founding in 1985. The Legal Service today counts 100 staff members of which about half are lawyers. It is divided into ten units over three directorates:

- A. Directorate for Institutional and Parliamentary Affairs;
- B. Directorate for Legislative Affairs;
- C. Directorate for Administrative and Financial Affairs.

5.3 An evolving structure at the service of the Members

Even if the European Parliament has gone through considerable changes during the last decades in terms of its role in the decision-making process of the European Union, there was no large-scale reform of the EP secretariat's organisational structure before the adoption of the so-called reform "raising the game" in 2004. Since then, the organisation of the EP's General Secretariat has been modified three times (in 2004, 2007 and 2009) in order to adapt better to the needs of the work of the MEPs and smooth the cooperation of the administrative leadership.

5.3.1 Improving the performance of the Secretariat and providing a better service to Members: the "raising the game" reform

Both shaping and reacting to the changes in the institutional environment of the EP, namely the widening and deepening of European integration and the increasing powers of the Parliament, the EP has constantly adapted its internal functioning. However, these reforms mostly concerned changes on the "political" side of the institution, i.e. procedures and organisation of the work of parliamentary committees, the President, political groups, Conference of Presidents and other political bodies. Meanwhile, the EP secretariat had grown considerably and nearly doubled its staff in the 20 years from 1980 to 2000. Yet most of the changes in the administration were incremental rather than involving major reforms or comprehensive strategies.

The necessity of structural reform was recognised in several EP resolutions in 2000, giving the political legitimacy to the major reform called "raising the game" which was initiated and driven by a core group of people, consisting of the Secretary-General and his closest advisors, and driven by the recognition that the secretariat needed to provide better expertise and improve Parliament's contribution to the quality of EU legislation.

The reform involved a whole range of measures including a change in the structure and competences of the Directorates-General, and the establishment of new structures and working methods.

More precisely, **three objectives were pursued:**

1) A better pooling of in-house area expertise

Members need to have the best expertise at their disposal if they want to be able to take the most efficient decisions. Formerly, the in-house expertise available for Members was both organically and geographically fragmented which did not help to provide an efficient service for Members or synergies between the services.

Therefore, two Directorates-General, DG for Committees and Delegations and the DG for Research (originally situated in Luxembourg) were restructured into the new Directorates-General Internal Policies and External Policies, which are now located in Brussels, close to the MEPs' activities. These two DGs are mainly made up of committee secretariats and policy departments which provide background research, studies and briefings. Thus, the distinction between the Directorates-General relates now to the topics that they are dealing with (internal or external policies of the EU) and no longer to the nature of the work itself (parliamentary work on the one side and research work on the other side). This allowed research to be brought closer to the activities of the committees.

The library was also transferred from Directorate-General Research to Directorate-General Presidency and is supposed to focus more on fast information provision (rather than in-depth analysis) and serving individual Members (rather than Members collectively). In-depth analysis should now be conducted and financially managed by policy departments on the request of parliamentary committees.

2) Providing better expertise using combined in-house and outside expertise: the introduction of project teams

The difficulty to obtain expertise in one subject, if this expertise was to come from different units, has found a solution with the creation of project teams. Until 2004, it was very difficult to use in-house expertise due to the difficulties resulting from the hierarchical and organisational structures and to combine this in-house expertise with outside knowledge. Project teams can henceforth be set up by the committee secretariats and can provide targeted assistance to rapporteurs on a number of priority issues. They are aimed at pooling together experts working in the same area but located in different administrative units in the EP or even outside of the Parliament.

3) Greater attention paid to the quality of texts

Before 2004, the quality control of texts was provided by the Legal Service at the level of the plenary, namely only at the very end of the deliberations in the EP.

A tabling service was then created in the Directorate-General Presidency to offer advice to Members and committee secretariats on the linguistic quality of texts, particularly amendments and to assume responsibility for the legal-linguistic revision of legislative texts. It was also decided that the legal-linguistic check should be extended to cover the level of the committees, too.

5.3.2 Clarifying and differentiating the Secretariat-General's missions and reinforcing synergies: the 2007 reform

In July 2007, the Bureau decided to create two new Directorates-General. The *Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences* (DG INTE) was created by scission of the *Directorate-General for Infrastructure and Interpretation*. The *Directorate-General for Innovation and Technological Support* (DG ITEC) results from the scission of the *Directorate-General for Translation and Publishing* and from the adjunction of a Directorate for Information Technologies.

This change now gives a clearer view of the different missions of the General Secretariat: the first four DGs deal with the policy side of the EP's role (or relating it to the public, in the case of DG Communication). The other DGs all provide the logistics for Parliament's work and deal with subjects such as personnel, buildings and equipment, translation, interpretation, finance, new technologies and legal affairs.

There are two different Directorates-General dealing with the linguistic aspects of Parliament's work which are the DG for Translation and the DG for Interpretation and Conferences. This situation represents the rationalisation of the EP's services, since the job of an interpreter is very specific and has to be distinguished from the work of a translator. An interpreter has a message to convey whereas a translator has to make sure that the two texts (the original version and the translated version) are identical. Therefore, one has to distinguish within Parliaments the services of translation and publishing, from the services of interpretation and organisation of conferences, which require different skills from the staff.

5.3.3 A need for more communication within the services of the General Secretariat

The last reform of the European Parliament's General Secretariat does not relate to its organisational chart, but to its way of functioning. In fact, the current Secretary-General has underlined that the work of all services within the Secretariat is interlinked and that there is a need for more communication among units and Directorates.

Therefore, the way the administrative leadership cooperates has been changed: the Directors-General and the Directors on the policy side (the first four DGs) as well as their colleagues from the resource and logistical side meet each other once a month in the *Enlarged Policy Management Team* and the *Enlarged Management Team* respectively. This change allows the development of common projects for the EP and the widening of the consultation process from the DGs directly concerned and the Secretary-General to all those involved before submitting it to the political authorities.

These efforts will be supported by new horizontal cooperation structures on issues on personnel, finance, informatics, interpretation and communication.

All these changes (2004, 2007 and 2009) demonstrate that the General Secretariat of the EP is a continuously evolving structure, searching for the most efficient provision of services adapted to the MEPs' needs.

5.3.4 Administrative work programme 2012-2014

Based on President Schulz's acceptance speech of January 2012, the Secretary General of the European Parliament in February 2012 issued a proposal for an Action Plan setting out the priorities for the period 2012-2014. This Action Plan underpins and was integrated into the new Administrative Work Programme for the same period which was drawn up by the different services of the administration. The Administrative Work Programme thus contains cross-cutting objectives as well as priority projects for each of Parliament's DGs. The part containing the projects of each DG is continually reviewed and also used to report on implementation.

The cross-cutting issues are:

MEPs as advocates of the citizens: this priority involves support to the new tool of direct citizen participation, the “European Citizens’ Initiative”; direct interactive web based communication with the Parliament; cooperation of Information Offices with national multiplier groups; enhancing the right of petition; increasing the support to constituency work.

Full exercise of EP powers conferred on it by the Lisbon Treaty: this will mean ensuring that EP resolutions are fully reflected in mandates for the negotiation of international agreements; enhanced parliamentary supervision of implementation of legislation adopted under the new “regulatory procedure with scrutiny”; making use of possibility to propose changes to EU Treaties; maximising influence within the process leading to the election of the Commission President; maximise parliamentary input into preparation and adoption of the Multiannual Financial Framework.

Strengthen the Community Method: The EP should seek to enhance the supranational decision-making as opposed to intergovernmental decision-making by deepening the partnership with the Commission and make dialogue with the Council a more everyday feature, developing this relationship towards bicameralism; make more systematic use of legislative own-initiatives; review use of first reading agreements aiming at a more prominent role for plenary and safeguarding the prerogatives of committees.

Respectful relationship between executive arm and law-makers: Parliament needs to ensure that it is fully involved through the whole lifecycle of legislation and should not only concentrate on the codecision phase of EU legislation but also follow the preparation phase within the Commission and the way the legislation is implemented.

More European democracy with more parliamentarism: The EP is to make particular efforts to ensure that parliaments are not side-lined in new multilateral formats such as the G20; seek to enhance parliamentary involvement in economic and monetary policy; achieve full parliamentary oversight over the European External Action Service; and enhance oversight in the field of the EU’s Common Security and Defence Policy, in cooperation with national parliaments.

Defending the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights: increase visibility of the annual debate on the implementation of the Charter of Fundamental Rights; organise hearings on situations in specific Member States; draw on expertise of authoritative fundamental rights experts during annual debates.

Raise profile of the EP as the forum for democracy and informed partisan debate: by inviting prominent speakers (other than EU Council Presidency and foreign Heads of State); holding early debates in plenary on legislation which is likely to be concluded at first reading; flexible seating arrangements in plenary chamber and/or reorganisation of plenary; increase campaigning capacity of communication services and put in place state of the art newsroom in the EP.

Regain public trust in the European integration process and restore public enthusiasm for Europe: the EP should seek to restore Europeans’ public enthusiasm for Europe by means of the House of European History; visits of the public to the Parliament; effectively implementing the Code of Conduct for Members; or designing more attractive European elections.

Promotion of Human Rights and Democracy worldwide: the EP should enhance mandate monitoring and budgetary control of the new European Neighbourhood Policy instruments in the Mediterranean region; actively participate in the European Endowment for Democracy; improve its

rapid reaction capacity; free up the potential of the Union for the Mediterranean; and make best use of the network of past laureates of its *Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought*.

Provide the parliamentary bodies and Members with the support needed to carry out their tasks as legislators to the full:

Political support: One of the major challenges to Members is access to and treatment of information when preparing legislative and non-legislative work. The level of expected knowledge allowing informed decision-making has increased tremendously over the last decade. Parliament's support staff has to respond to these growing challenges and structures have to be adapted.

1. Parliament has developed and put a large number of services at the disposal of its Members; the challenge of the coming two years is to use the possible synergy of all the resources created which should be concentrated around the daily work of Members. For key files, this should be done in the form of administrative project teams, which should come into place under the leadership of the Committee secretariat, as soon as a rapporteur for a given report is nominated.
2. A manual containing an overview and a short explanation of all services offered to Members could be prepared and distributed.
3. The new Library concept, once implemented, will considerably enhance the support to individual Members.

Logistical support: Efficient work can only be done by Members of Parliament if they have the best possible logistical support. Therefore the following actions are highlighted:

1. IT service: DG Innovation and Technological Support (DG ITEC) will continue to implement the medium term IT strategy in order to develop even further a high quality modern environment, enabling the EP to become ever less dependent on paper, allowing Members access to all necessary documentation wherever they are.
 - a. E-committee and e-meeting programmes have absolute priority to be implemented as soon as possible for the creation of a more efficient and paperless working environment for MEPs and staff. This includes also an electronic signature programme.
 - b. ICT security will take a more important place in the Institution's life. This concerns defence against attacks on systems, cybercrime and protection of Parliament's and Members' personal data. Safety and security in ICT need to be further developed and integrated in the global security concept. Related phenomena such as mass and anonymous mailing have also to be tackled.
 - c. Relations with national parliaments are to be strengthened through use of video-conference facilities. These facilities should also help Members to communicate with stakeholders in their constituency and enhance cooperation among staff of Members and the administration located in different work places, thus reducing travel costs and carbon emissions.
 - d. Knowledge is produced and re-used more and more in innovative formats, such as Wikipedia. Parliament should pay attention to how to monitor such sites.
2. Office space: Members need more office space to house their growing personal support staff adequately. Several buildings have come to an age when maintenance has to be stepped up and in some cases substantial renovation works need to be started. Additional office space in Brussels will not become available before 2017. Flexible solutions for the allocation of office space are therefore needed. A plan for building management needs to combine extensive renovations, extension of office space for Members and a new and more intelligent scheme which allows Members and the Political Groups to use space allocated to them in a more flexible way.

3. An ambitious environmental agenda: Having secured certification by the European *Eco-Management and Audit Scheme EMAS* and completed the process of calculating its carbon footprint, Parliament will now implement new measures to achieve the environmental target of a 30% reduction of CO₂ emissions between 2006 and 2020 as decided by Parliament in 2007. Between 2006 and 2010 a reduction by 14% of CO₂ emissions per employee-equivalent could be reached, but this positive development was slowed down in 2010.
4. Financial / Front office services: Part of a Member's working time is currently lost by dealing with personnel and financial questions. All financial procedures involving salaries, allowances and travel expenses should become fully electronically managed, thus limiting the need for an MEP's personal presence in payment offices to a strict minimum.
5. Support services for transport: Time is a decisive factor for efficient work and time spent on travel / transport should be kept to a minimum for Members. Therefore more efforts to improve efficiency could be undertaken by DG Finance in order to enhance the services of the travel agency and a new car service strategy will be implemented.

5.3.5 The European Parliament 2025 - Preparing for Complexity

Parliament's current Secretary General decided to launch a discussion on the future of the European Parliament by assessing the issues that are likely to affect the context in which it operates and which thus are important to address politically and in terms of developing and managing the secretariat. For this purpose he requested a study that should facilitate internal discussions, identify challenges and develop options how to address these. This report was presented in January 2012 during an "away-day" meeting of the Bureau and the Secretariat's Directors General under the title "The European Parliament 2025 - Preparing for Complexity".⁴

The report focuses on four developments which are frequently identified as determining factors of world affairs:

- › the political multi-polarity of the globalised world,
- › the preponderance of multi-level governance,
- › the increase in the number of actors contributing to the drafting and implementation of public policies,
- › technology as a factor in the speed of change.

The report points out that the new multi-polarity of the globalised world, the multilevel nature of governance, the multiple players interacting in law-making, are likely to create a new context for the EP directly or indirectly. This heightened complexity may entail risks of fragmentation of (economic) governance, regulation and law. Fragmentation may lead to a loss of coherence, systematic overlaps and lasting conflicts between jurisdictions, as well as to an institutional paralysis, and, then, to democratic frustration, as it becomes more and more difficult to understand who is producing change in regulation and should be made accountable for success and failures. In order to contribute to actively prevent the risk of political and regulatory fragmentation, the EP has to prepare itself for this upcoming complexity.

4 http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/SG/documents/EP2025-Preparing_for_Complexity_EN_FINAL.PDF

5.4 Investing in Human resources: the staff of the EP

Having the best qualified people working within its structures constitutes a challenge for any institution. It is not sufficient to be well organised or to have a large budget if the staff who are in charge of the implementation of that budget are not sufficiently competent. As any other EU institution, the EP has chosen to recruit mainly permanent officials, instead of contract agents. Selecting highly qualified people through challenging open competitions regardless of their political affiliation is a precondition to having staff that is both skilled and motivated.

5.4.1 A highly qualified staff

Main features of the Staff of the Parliament

Regarding the staff of the European Parliament, four main characteristics have to be highlighted:

- 1) Compared with most national parliaments in Europe, the European Parliament's administration is quite extensive, with around 6 400 posts for 754 Members (not counting their parliamentary assistants). For example, in France, only 1 351 civil servants assist the 577 Members in their duties. This difference can be explained by the specific conditions in which the EP is obliged to work. Indeed, the adjustment from 11 to 23 working languages with the 6th legislature (2004-2009) has led to a major increase in the need for linguistic staff that is required to make it possible for all MEPs to participate fully in parliamentary activities. Yet already in 2008 1 958 posts (then 38.7%) were dedicated to linguistic tasks (working in some of the units of the Plenary Directorate, in the Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences and in all the units of the Directorate-General for Translation).
- 2) A second specificity of the EP staff is their **Statute or staff regulations**. Parliament's permanent officials are European civil servants who are subject to the same terms and conditions as those working in the other EU institutions, even if some specific implementing provisions have been drafted by the EP. It means that even if they work for a Parliament, they do not have a specific statute. On the contrary, French officials working for the *Assemblée Nationale* or the *Sénat* have for example their own statutes which differ from the general statute of French public servants.

More information on the EU Staff Regulations of officials can be found online on:
http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/index_en.htm

The Staff Regulations were completely revised and simplified in 2004. The system which was divided into five categories of staff until 2004 has been replaced by two function groups: AD for Administrators, including linguists, and AST for Assistants. At the time of writing, new proposals revising the Staff Regulations are being debated. For example, staff cuts of 5% by 2018 are foreseen in the proposals. In addition, the retirement and pensions system is likely to be modified as well.⁵

- 3) A third specificity relates to **multiculturalism**. The staff come from 27 Member States, even if for a range of historical and geographical reasons, there is some disparity in the number of officials from different nationalities across the institution as a whole. Nationals of countries that joined the Union earlier tend to be more numerous proportionately than those from countries that joined later. But the number of staff coming from these latter countries is increasing more quickly than those of the older member states. For reasons of proximity, Belgians and citizens of Luxembourg are over-represented, especially in the AST function group.

5 For more information see: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2011:0890:FIN:EN:PDF>

- 4) The last characteristic is the **three different work places** of the staff of the General Secretariat: the European Parliament is spread over three places of work, with additional information offices in all Member States. Whereas the staff who work directly with Members are located in Brussels, supporting functions (i.e. human resources or translation services) are based in Luxembourg. The staff gather once a month, during the plenary session, in Strasbourg and can then hold, when needed, common meetings.

The following table presents a list of the different categories of the EP's staff on 1 January 2012

Posts (personnel on the 1st of January 2012)	6 395	100%
General Secretariat	5 790	90.5%
<i>Permanent staff</i>	4 813	75.2%
<i>Temporary staff</i>	977	15.3%
Political groups	605	9.5%
Places of work of the General Secretariat		
Strasbourg	98	1.5%
Luxembourg	2 461	38.5%
Brussels	3 601	56.3%
Other	235	3.7%
Categories of staff		
Administrators	2 500	39.1%
Assistants (AST officials)	3 208	50.2%
Other	687	10.7%
Categories of job in the General Secretariat⁶		
Linguistic assistance	1 707	26.7%
Administration	1 189	18.6%
Parliamentary assistance	997	15.6%
Communication	575	9.0%
Material and logistical assistance	511	8%
Management	594	9.3%
Finance	409	6.4%
Data processing	338	5.3%
Legal assistance	70	1.1%
Average age	46 years⁷	

6 Linguistic assistance means translators and interpreters. Administration here refers to EP's support staff (i.e. human resources). Parliamentary assistance includes all the jobs linked with the work of MEPs within the

7 The average ages of officials, temporary staff in temporary posts (Article 2(a) of the CEOS), temporary staff in permanent posts (Article 2(b) of the CEOS) and contract staff employed under Article 3a of the CEOS in service as at 31 December 2010.

In order to have a highly qualified staff working for the EP, it is important to select the best candidates through anonymous selection procedures. It is also important to provide additional training for staff during their career within the EP.

Recruitment through challenging open competitions

The staff of the Parliament can be divided into two groups: about 75% of the staff are European civil servants whereas the remaining 25% are temporary staff members and contract agents.

1) To become a **European civil servant**, a candidate must take part in an open competition, organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (known as EPSO). The dates of open competitions are published in the Official Journal of the EU and announced on the EPSO website.

One can distinguish between two main categories on the basis of the tasks performed by European civil servants: Administrators (AD), who cover management, planning and research as well as language-related and scientific tasks, and Assistants (AST), who cover operative tasks in all areas of the institutions, such as budgetary and financial matters, human resources management, IT, documentation and secretarial and office work. It should be noted that assistants have a university degree in most cases.

To succeed in either category a candidate has to show ability, knowledge, initiative and motivation. In order to be considered for the selection process, the candidate needs to meet the eligibility criteria (qualifications, professional experience, etc.) of a given competition, as published in the Official Journal.

The requirements will always be equal to or higher than the minimum eligibility standards for the 'assistants' and 'administrators' groups, which are set out in the Staff Regulations. In any case, one has to be a national of an EU country (though specific exceptions can be made to prepare for EU enlargements), have fulfilled any obligations concerning military service and be physically fit to perform the duties.

The selection procedures for careers with the EU institutions changed in 2010 and there was a shift from knowledge to a competency-based assessment. The key competencies that EPSO now looks for in candidates are related to analysis and problem solving, communication, learning and development potential, prioritising and organising work, resilience, team work and leadership skills.

At the Administrator level there are two stages in the new selection procedure: the first phase involves computer-based testing organised throughout the EU and in some major cities around the world, and an assessment centre evaluation in Brussels in the second stage. The computer tests assess verbal, numerical and abstract reasoning, as well as professional skills and situational judgement for some function groups. The assessment centre tests job-related competencies and are organised in English, French or German (one of which must be the candidate's second language). It involves practical tests or case studies, structured interviews and group exercises, as well as oral presentations.

The competitions are usually organised for several or all EU institutions jointly. Unlike for example United Nations competitions they are *not* organised according to citizenship of specific member states, but open to all EU citizens who fulfil the language, professional and academic requirements. Usually they are either open to all language groups or to a set of language groups according to the needs of the institutions. Linguistic competences, although not necessarily decisive, are an important factor in recruitment. The minimum requirement is "satisfactory" knowledge of one

other official EU language in addition to the mother tongue. Among the two languages must be English, French or German. New officials are then to acquire a working knowledge of a third EU language before being able to qualify for a first promotion.

Competitions generally take place in two steps, a written and an oral part. Candidates sit written tests on their knowledge and skills, generally including multiple choice questions relating to European integration and history, and verbal and numerical reasoning. Those who pass the first stage are then called to an interview with a selection panel. Specific competitions can also be held for middle management and senior management positions.

Once the candidate has succeeded, their name is placed on the reserve list - a pool of candidates that can be drawn on for future recruitment. These lists are published in the Official Journal. Once on a reserve list, candidates can be invited to an interview and be recruited to a vacant post by any interested service in the EP. Being on the reserve list does not guarantee automatic recruitment to a permanent official's position. These lists usually have a time-limit of one or two years.

2) There are also several types of non-permanent posts. **Temporary staff members and contract agents** are hired to occupy certain posts that were not possible to fill with people on the reserve list or to strengthen the team in a service that temporarily needs additional capacity.

EPSO is also in charge of organising tests that have to be taken by applicants for most of the non-permanent posts. For example in 2010, 65 temporary staff members were newly recruited to fill permanent posts temporarily.

The selection process of *contract agents* begins with candidates filling in online applications in response to calls for expressions of interest published on the EPSO website. These applications are then stored in a database. Those applicants who match specific skills profiles and who have the right qualifications then sit tests to assess their aptitude, linguistic ability, knowledge of European integration, and professional competence. If successful in the tests, those who are considered by a hiring service to be suitable to their specific requirements will be invited to an interview by a selection committee. The profile of candidates who have successfully completed the contract agent tests will be held in the database for three years.

More information on the EU's recruitment procedures can be found online on: http://europa.eu/epso/index_en.htm

3) The Parliament's Secretariat General offers yearly about 400 **paid traineeships** of five months for young people with a university background from all over the world to make them familiar with the workings of the institution. Special traineeships have been developed for young people without university training and for the disabled.

A lifelong training policy

Hiring very highly skilled people through challenging open competitions is not sufficient and needs to be complemented by lifelong-learning facilities. All officials have to be kept up-to-date in the performance of their duties. Therefore, professional training has to be a mandatory, permanent, regular process extending over the whole of an official's career.

The EP enacted a new professional training policy in 2004 which underlines the advantages of having an ambitious training policy. On the one hand, professional training is essential in order to enable the Secretariat to cope as effectively as possible with an ever changing working environment and with staff mobility and redeployment needs. On the other hand, professional training

provides the opportunity for staff to widen their range of skills, allows them to progress smoothly in their careers and thus encourages them to stay in the institution.

Specifically, training has been subdivided into four categories:

1. General training courses on languages, information technology, personal effectiveness and organisation at work and basic financial training.
2. Training courses corresponding to the basic skills required in order to perform the duties linked to a given job. These are primarily aimed at new recruits and officials who change post as a result of a transfer, promotion or the mobility system.
3. Additional specialised training with a view to meeting the changing operational needs specific to certain Directorates-General and/or departments.
4. Career development programmes aimed in particular at administrators starting their career, staff subject to the mobility system, and managerial staff.

Linguistic training represents 45% of all training courses. It should also be emphasised that additional specialised training (category 3) represents 15% of all training courses which can be explained by the constant effort to adapt the selection of professional training courses to the needs expressed by the Directorates-General.

The annual staff report offers a valuable opportunity to ascertain any professional training requirements the staff member concerned may have. Categories 3 and 4 must be devised jointly by, on the one hand, the Directorates-General and their departments and, on the other, the Directorate-General for Personnel, and in particular the unit responsible for professional training, whereas an agent can register themselves for category 1 or 2 training, since the number of training courses has been agreed with the staff member's immediate superior. Each Directorate-General also has to appoint an officer duly empowered to take charge of professional training.

5.4.2 A motivated staff

In order to keep this highly qualified staff within the house, an attractive statute, allowing promotions and several other advantages, has been introduced.

An attractive statute⁸

EU officials can spend their entire career in the EP, except if dismissed on the grounds of incompetence (one case in 2009) or through invalidity (15 cases in 2010). Officials enjoy an attractive statute which strengthens the incentive to keep working in the European institutions.

⁸ This section presents issues which relate only to officials

The following table sums up the main features of the benefits of the Statute:

Salary and expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From around €2 600 per month for a newly recruited AST 1 official to around €17 000 per month for the most senior AD 16 officials (before tax and social insurance contributions); - Grade is broken up into five seniority steps with corresponding salary increases; - Annual adjustment of basic salaries in line with inflation and purchasing power in the EU countries; - Reimbursement of expenses incurred by the official in the course of the performance of their duties
Allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expatriation allowance equivalent to 16% of the basic salary if the official left their home country to come and work for the EP; - Some family-related allowances according to the family situation (household allowance, child allowance, educational allowance, pre-school allowance).
Pension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Officials normally reach retirement age at 63⁹, but it is possible to take early retirement with a reduced pension from the age of 55, or to work until the age of 65; - Pensions are paid as a percentage of the final basic salary with a maximum of 70% of their final basic salary. Officials accumulate 1.9% pension rights every year; - Whilst working, the contribution of the official to the pension scheme will correspond to 10.25% of the basic salary; - Staff can also apply to transfer the pension rights they already have from a previous job or as a self-employed person.
Sickness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Benefit from the Joint Sickness Insurance Scheme of the European Communities, which covers medical expenses at a reimbursement rate of 80% for most kinds of treatment (subject to maximum limits) and which is subject to a contribution of about 2% of the basic monthly salary; - Accident insurance and insurance against occupational diseases; - Possibility to undergo a preventive medical check-up every year.
Taxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Salary not subject to national income tax but to a Community tax which is paid directly back into the EU's budget. This tax is levied progressively at a rate of between 8% and 45% of the taxable portion of the salary.
Administrative status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Active employment; - Secondment; - Leave <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual leave of 24 working days; - Special leave for marriage, moving house, death of relatives or serious illnesses, births, etc; - Possibility to have unpaid leave on personal grounds. - Non active status.
Reconciling professional & personal life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maternity leave (20 weeks); - Paternity leave (ten days); - Six months parental leave per child available on a basic monthly allowance; - Modern working arrangements (part-time work).

9 The proposed changes to Staff Regulations foresee a retirement age at 65 with the possibility to work until the age of 67.

Since officials benefit from an attractive Statute, they are also subject to some **obligations** which are developed in the Statute, but also in a Code of Conduct on the obligations of officials and other servants of the EP adopted by the Bureau in July 2008. The agents working for the EP are subject to two kinds of obligations:

1. General obligations, as regards independence, circumspection and discretion;
2. Service obligations: duties to be at Parliament's disposal, to perform the tasks assigned to them, to treat the Institution and one's superiors with respect, ban on the insulting of colleagues' dignity, to exercise their responsibilities, to cooperate, to fulfil their private obligations.

Possibilities for promotion and mobility

A person will be all the more interested in working in the EP given the fact that they have the possibility for promotion and mobility. Therefore, the Statute foresees mechanisms for promotion. Moreover, more emphasis has recently been put on mobility possibilities.

The EP's career system consists of a single pay scale with 16 grades. Within this pay scale, Assistants (AST) can occupy grades 1 to 11 while Administrators (AD) can occupy grades 5 to 16.

Open competitions are generally organised for specific grades between AST 1-4 and AD 5-8, and occasionally for management positions (AD 9 and higher), in particular after EU enlargements to new countries. A newly recruited official will be appointed to the grade set out in the notice of the competition they have passed, usually the first step (with an exception for people who have professional experience).

Each grade has five 'seniority steps' and an agent will automatically advance through these steps according to his seniority in the institution. An official can move up one step every two years until they are promoted to the next grade or until they reach the last step in the grade.

Moreover, merit is a dynamic rather than a static concept which takes into account consistent efforts over time. Therefore, staff that displays sufficient merit can be promoted. The basic principle is that each Director-General or Head of Unit receives a total number of points equal to a number multiplied by 2.1 of officials with at least three months' service during the reference year and distributes them among their staff. The annual staff report allows the manager to give each agent merit points within a range of one to three. An undeserving official receives no points. For each grade there is a minimum of merit points or reference threshold above which an official will automatically be considered for promotion, but the final decision on promotions is with the Secretary-General. In 2010 29.6% of Parliament's officials were promoted.

Officials who join the Parliament in the Assistant (AST) category (which should not be confused with Members' personal, *parliamentary assistants*) can progress to the Administrator category by following the 'certification procedure'. This allows selected staff, who have demonstrated the potential to carry out 'administrator' tasks to follow mandatory training and sit final exams. If they succeed, they are able to apply for 'administrator' posts.

Mobility: Although some officials might prefer to stay ten to fifteen years in the same job, others prefer to change. They are convinced that they will gain a better comprehension of the institution if they work in different areas and are motivated by the challenge of getting involved in a new job. In any case, mobility has become an obligation for most officials in the Administrator category.

The regulation governing mobility policy, adopted by Parliament's Bureau on 29 March 2004, provides for a system of mobility for administrators in posts which are not specific. These 'generalist' administrators are expected to change post. Firstly, twice during the seven years after entry into

service with the EU institutions, then before the end of each further seven-year period, until they reach the age of 60 or have completed 30 years' service with the institutions. Officials can apply for the internally published vacant posts in their career bracket in order to comply with the mobility rules; in other cases DG Personnel assists them to find a new position when they are due to become mobile. After seven years in the same post, the Secretary-General may decide to reassign staff to another post, or to grant a derogation.

The posts of Director-General and Director that have been occupied for more than seven years by the same person are the subject of a communication to the Bureau. The Bureau decides on the basis of Parliament's interests whether or not to apply the mobility policy to those concerned.

Positions exempted from mobility are specifically identified by the Secretary-General and concern for example the Legal Service, the Medical Service and IT experts, as well as auditors and interpreters and translators, and some posts concerned with Parliament's security.

It should also be pointed out that it is possible to move from the EP to another institution (29 officials in 2010) or from any other EU institution to the EP (83 officials in 2010). In fact, over the past years between 50% and 60% of applications for vacant posts in the EP General Secretariat were from officials of other EU institutions.

5.4.3 Staff challenges for the EP

The EP is facing two major issues: one relates to external decisions and is linked to the consequences that EU enlargement has for the parliament; the second one is to achieve greater gender equality within its staff.

Enlargement and staff issues

Enlargement has two consequences:

1. The need for new staff, especially translators and interpreters (each new language is calculated to add 120 extra staff as a minimum);
2. Hiring of persons coming from the new Member States.

Moreover, in order to facilitate the integration of the staff from new Member States, the EP anticipates the enlargement. It selects auxiliaries from the country or countries in question in order to give them a chance to see the institution from the inside and to prepare for the open competitions organised to recruit new permanent officials, while the EP works with the candidate country or countries in order to improve the number of linguists.

On the other side, due to the history of the EP, the number of officials retiring from active service is on the rise. In 2010 127 colleagues retired, the average age of those who retired being 61.

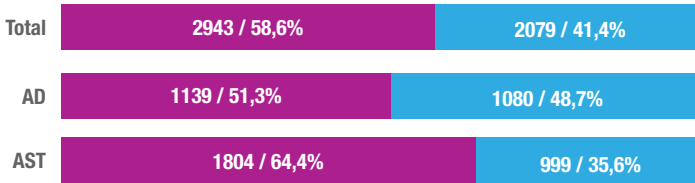
Gender Equality Policies in the EP Secretariat

Equality policies now have a firmly established place in the EP Secretariat's objectives. The Bureau reports in this area and the Statement of Principles on the promotion of equality and diversity, adopted by the Bureau on 13 November 2006, provide a policy framework. The EP Secretariat aims to achieve gender balance at all levels of its organisational plan.

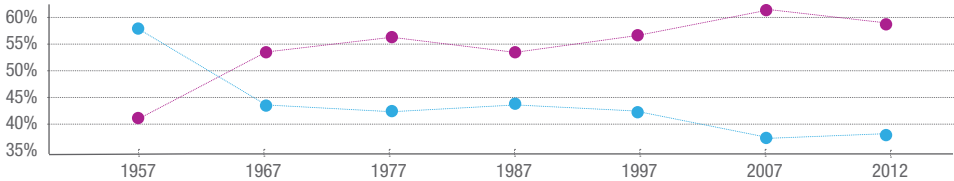
The staff statistics show that women are over-represented in the AST category of staff and particularly under-represented in the middle management AD positions: while slightly more than half of all administrators are female, fewer than one in four units is led by a woman (23.6% of heads of units were women in January 2012).

Women at Administrative level EP Secretariat and Political Group's Secretariats

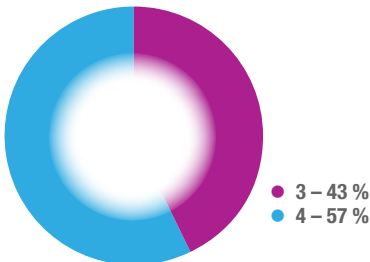
EP Secretariat staff



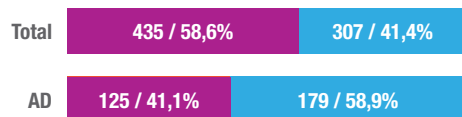
EP Secretariat staff 1957 – 2012



Secretaries-General of political groups



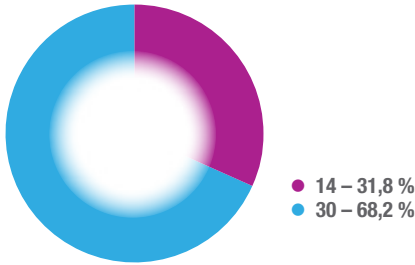
Staff of political groups



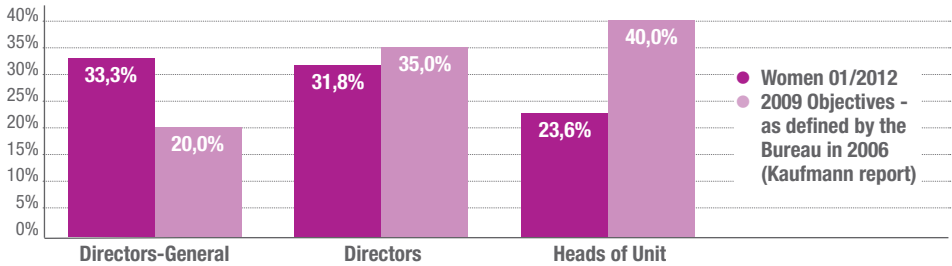
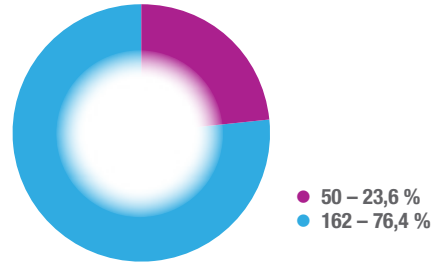
Since 2007, efforts have been particularly focused on middle management where the under-representation of women is most marked. In 2007, the Administration launched, as a positive action measure, a pilot training and motivation programme for women potential heads of unit. Guidelines on the use of gender-neutral language have been approved, both for internal and external communication. Equality and diversity training is accessible to all staff.

The Bureau's targets for the representation of women in management posts has been exceeded for Directors-General, as 33.3% of them are women (the target was 20%) and are about to be achieved for Directors, 31.8% (the target is 35%). On the other hand, only 23.6% of heads of unit are women while it was hoped to achieve 40%. The efforts undertaken in favour of a better gender balance at middle management level should, therefore, be continued and stepped up.

Directors



Heads of Unit



For that matter, the Administration is considering ways of how best to encourage more women, eligible to become heads of unit, to apply for these jobs. The increased female participation in recruitment which took place after the two last enlargements represents, in this regard, an opportunity for the years to come.

The **Action Plan 2009-2013** for the promotion of gender equality and diversity in the EP Secretariat, adopted by the Bureau on 9 March 2009, is one of the key tools for ensuring that the principles of equality, diversity and non-discrimination are translated into practice in the work of the EP Secretariat during Parliament's 7th parliamentary term.

The Action Plan is based on the three lines of action set out in the statement of principles, namely:

- ensuring full equality of women and men in all aspects of professional life;
- guaranteeing full equality of opportunities for persons with disabilities and favouring their full participation and inclusion;
- removing any obstacles to recruitment and any potential discrimination on the basis of race, colour or ethnic origin.

and two transversal objectives:

- reinforcing leadership and accountability with regard to equality and diversity;
- promoting an open and inclusive working environment.

The implementation of the Action Plan involves, due to its horizontal and over-arching nature, all stakeholders in the EP Secretariat.

6

6. Parliament's Budget

The budget and its implementation always play a symbolic role and the effectiveness and value of an institution can be judged by studying its budget. In order to fulfil its various functions, the EP has a considerable budget, whose implementation is carefully controlled.

6.1 An important budget drafted by the EP every year

6.1.1 A budget which represents one fifth of the total administrative expenditure of the EU institutions

The budget of the EP is part of the general budget of the European Union.

In global figures, the 2011 EU budget amounted to € 144.57 billion (in commitment appropriations), divided into five headings (see 2.2). The budget for administration of all EU institutions (including the European Commission, the European Parliament, the Council of Ministers, the European Court of Justice and the European Court of Auditors as well as agencies and pensions for retired staff) is the fifth heading. It represented € 8.172 billion in the budget adopted by the EP on 15 December 2010.

Each year Parliament publishes in the Official Journal a "Report on the budgetary and financial management" of its own budget. This report is the basis for the procedure in which the Plenary, upon recommendation of the Budget Control Committee, grants discharge to the President for the execution of the budget. The last available report is the one for 2011 according to which Parliament's final appropriations totalled € 1 685 829 000 representing 20.03% of the administrative expenses of the EU as whole.

Table 1 : EP expenditure in 2011

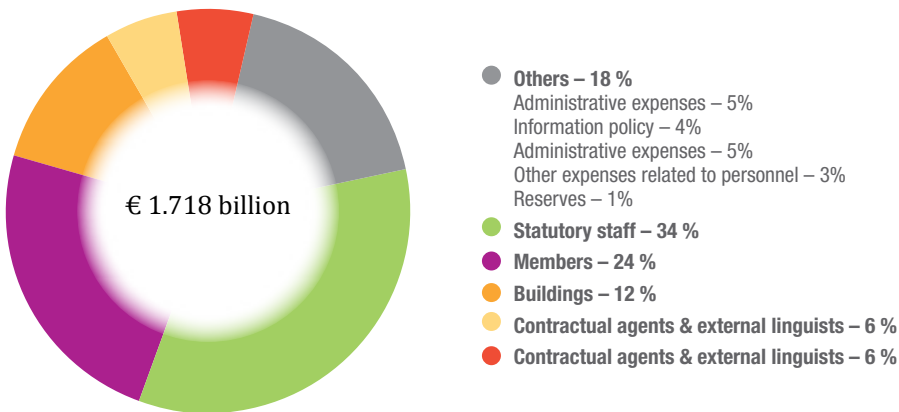
Expenditure	Amount (million)	Percentage of total expenditure
Staff expenditure	673.7	43%
Investment expenditure on buildings	188.4	12%
Members	195.4	12%
Information technology and telecommunications	109.9	7%
Information activities and products	94.2	6%
Political groups	78.5	5%
Other administrative expenditure	62.8	4%
Parliamentary assistance	172.7	11%

Representing about 43% of the EP budget, the **staff expenditure** represents the highest figure (not including Members' and their assistants' salaries). This is specific to the EU and due to the 2004 and 2007 enlargements when ten and then two new Member States joined the EU. These enlargements have had a significant effect on the workload and staffing requirements: in fact,

since 2007, the EU has been working in 23 languages which means that all official documents have to be translated into 23 languages. The multilingual nature of the European Parliament is estimated to give rise to costs of circa € 415 million.

Another specificity of the EP budget relates to **investment expenditure** (about € 188 million) and to the expenditure on **travel** (for example € 81 million for Members only). The existence of three places of work (on top of Members travelling from across Europe) is said to cost approximately € 148 million a year, and the fact that its Membership has a continental reach to involve further travel costs of € 90 million.

A last point has to be made on the **evolution of the expenses** of the EP's budget. Until 2009, the three major expenses were personnel, Members and buildings, however, since the 2009 elections, Members are subject to a new Statute and receive their salary from the EP and no longer from their own national parliaments. Nevertheless, due namely to rational management of buildings, the budget of the EP normally respects a self-imposed limit of 20% of the administrative expenses of the EU, the sole exception being in 2011 when, the EP slightly exceeded this while falling back below 20% with the 2012 budget. In fact, the EP now owns the vast majority of its buildings and the budget related to buildings is decreasing since maintenance has proven to be cheaper than renting.



Expenditure by destination (in 2012 budget)

6.1.2 A major role for the EP in the procedure of drawing up its own budget

Within the framework of the general rules governing the EP budget as well as the expenditure and revenue of the institution, the EP has some scope to determine its own budget.

6.1.2.1 General rules governing the EP budget

These general rules governing the EP budget can be drawn from the Treaty establishing the Treaty on European Union, the Financial Regulation and the Implementing Rules.

The most important rules that apply to all EU budgets are the nine budgetary principles, according to which the budgets are to be adopted and implemented. The following principles were adopted to ensure good use of public money and to facilitate control by Parliament:

- *Annuality* means that expenditure and revenue are programmed and authorised for one year, starting on January 1 and ending on December 31.
- *Unit of account* is the budgetary principle according to which the budget is drawn up and implemented in euro and the accounts are presented in euro.
- *Unity* is the budgetary principle according to which all EU revenue and expenditure are forecast and authorised each year through the EU budget.
- *Universality* means that total revenue must cover total payment appropriations and that all revenue and expenditure must be entered in full without any adjustment against each other.
- *Equilibrium* is the budgetary principle according to which budget revenue and payment appropriations must be in balance. A consequence thereof is the impossibility for the European Community to borrow money.
- *Accuracy* means that the EU will not spend more than is necessary. According to this principle, an appropriation may not be entered in the budget if it is not for an item of expenditure considered necessary; in the EP, each expenditure has to meet the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timed) criteria and all operations should be measured by indicators.
- *Sound financial management* stipulates that budget appropriations must be used according to economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- *Specification* means that appropriations are earmarked for specific purposes, by title and chapter, as defined each year by the budgetary authority.
- *Transparency* stresses several publication obligations on the part of the Commission. The adopted budget must be published without delay on its website, in the Official Journal, consolidated financial statements & financial management reports of the institutions are to be published in the Official Journal.

6.1.2.2 A major role for the EP in the determination of its budget

The EP budgetary procedure can be divided into two steps: an internal step when the EP draws up its draft estimates and a second step after the incorporation of the EP budget into the budget of the EU. It is important to note that the EP plays a major role in each of these steps.

Stage One for the EP budget

During this stage, which extends from the last month of the year (December $n - 2$) preceding the year ($n - 1$) preceding the budget year in question (n), all of the actors involved in the procedure belong to the EP (Secretariat General or Members). It means that the EP alone draws up the estimates of its own budget.

Table 2: the EP budgetary procedure (step one)

Procedure	Who?	When?
Note to EP Directors-General (DGs) asking for DG needs	Secretary-General (SG)	Nov n-2
Preliminary statement for their Directorate General	DG	Dec n-2
Hearings of DGs on the basis of the preliminary statement	SG/DG finances	Dec n-2
Report on preliminary draft estimates which defines the priority objectives and the resources necessary for the coming year	SG	Feb n-1
Adoption of the preliminary draft estimates	Bureau	Mar n-1
Submission of the draft estimates	Committee on budgets	Mar n-1
Statement of estimates	Plenary	Mar-n-1
Incorporation of Parliament's estimates into the draft budget of the European Union	European Commission	Apr n -1

Stage Two for the EP budget

Once the EP draft budget is included in Heading 5 of the Draft Budget of the EU by the Commission, the normal budgetary procedure starts and it is within this procedure that corrections and further amendments can be made to the EP budget as required (see 2.2 for the general budget procedure).

6.2 Strict control of the implementation of the budget

Being the only directly-elected body of the European Union, the European Parliament is one of the most visible institutions of the European Union because its Members represent the EU's citizens. A strict implementation and control of its budget is crucial for maintaining its credibility and reputation for two reasons:

- Like any other institutions, it is funded with taxpayers' money. It is therefore important to make sure that this public money is used in the most correct and efficient way;
- Being the symbol of democracy, it should be an example of transparency and efficiency.

In order to meet these requirements, the EP has introduced **two series of rules**:

- The first set of rules aims at allowing an efficient implementation of the budget;
- The second set imposes strict controls on the implementation of the EP budget.

6.2.1 Rules determining an efficient implementation of the budget

The means at the disposal of the European Parliament to ensure that the budget will be implemented in an efficient way are to define the role, duties and responsibility of the financial actors and to provide obligations regarding the content of the implementing acts. Parliament therefore adopted internal rules on the implementation of the Parliament's budget in 2005, which complete those contained in the Treaties, in the financial regulations and in the implementing rules. It also applies, as any EU public institution, the rules on public procurement contracts to ensure a more rational use of public funds.

6.2.1.1 A strict separation of the functions of authorising officer and accounting officer prevents abuses of power from financial actors

The Financial Regulation lists three financial actors: authorising officer, accounting officer and imprest administrator.

1) *The authorising officer* is the President of the EP or other officials by delegation (the Secretary-General for all expenditure, the Directors General for those budget items for which responsibility has been delegated to them or other authorising officers by sub-delegation if the occasion arises). They shall be responsible in each institution for implementing revenue and expenditure rules in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and for ensuring that the requirements of legality and regularity are complied with;

2) *The accounting officer* is responsible for payments, collection of revenue and keeping the accounts. In order to prevent abuses of power from officials and to protect the interests of taxpayers, the duties and responsibilities of these actors are described accurately in the implementing rules.

Moreover, article 58 of the Financial Regulation imposes the respect of **the principle of separation of duties**. It means that the duties of the authorising officer and accounting officer shall be segregated and mutually incompatible. Two consequences follow from this principle:

- The person who decides to implement an expenditure is not the one who is in charge of paying this expenditure and no single actor has total power over the implementation of the budget;
- These two financial actors are controlling each other.

3) *The imprest administrators* are designated by the institution's accounting officer and are in charge of the management of imprest accounts. These accounts shall be set up by the institution's accounting officers for the collection of revenue other than own resources and for the payment of small sums as defined in the implementing rules, when it is materially impossible or inefficient to carry out payment operations by budgetary procedures. In that case, the imprest administrator will both implement and pay the expenditure or recover the debt.

6.2.1.2 Issuing standard documents for the implementation of the budget facilitates its efficiency

The Financial Regulations and internal EP documents outline in detail the content of the three main tools used to implement the budget:

- A *recovery order and a debit note for the debtor*, must be drawn up by the authorising officer responsible for any amount receivable that is identified as being certain, of a fixed amount and due. It is the operation by which the authorising officer responsible instructs the accounting officer to recover the amount established as receivable. The accounting officer is responsible for recovering the amount receivable.
- A *commitment* is an operation whereby the authorising officer enters into or establishes an obligation which results in a charge for the EP. A distinction must therefore be made between a budgetary commitment and a legal commitment; the latter is the act whereby the authorising officer enters into or establishes an obligation, whereas the budgetary commitment is the operation reserving the appropriation necessary to cover subsequent payments to honour a legal commitment. A legal commitment for Parliament towards a third party must be preceded by a budgetary commitment but it should be pointed out that the budgetary commitment and the legal commitment must be adopted by the same authorising officer (**single signature principle**), save in duly substantiated cases.
- The *payment order* is the implementing act the authorising officer uses to give the accountant the instruction to pay.

Common rules for the use of these tools (documents and operations) contribute to ensuring the **uniformity** of the implementation of the EP budget, which is done by many actors. It also limits the possibility of errors in the implementation.

6.2.1.3 Procurement management aims at giving the EP best value for money

When the European Parliament, through one of its authorising departments, wants to obtain, against payment of a price paid in whole or in part from the budget, the supply of movable or immovable assets, the execution of works or the provision of services, it has to follow the procedures established by the Financial Regulations on procurement management.

For example, *building contracts* for the acquisition of land, *supply contracts* for the acquisition of products by purchase or leasing are subject to procurement rules.

All procurement by the Institution must comply with the principles of transparency, proportionality, equal treatment and non-discrimination and be consistent with the principle of sound financial management.

Several procedures exist (open, restricted or negotiated procedure), but will depend on the value of the contract which must be estimated over the entire lifetime of the contract.

Table 4: choosing the procedure

Estimated value of contract		Type of procedure
Supplies Services	Works	Minimum procedure applicable (see important notes below)
≤ € 1 000		Simple payment of costs against invoices
≤ € 15 000	≤ € 15 000	Negotiated procedure with a single tender
≤ € 60 000	≤ € 60 000	Negotiated procedure with at least three candidates
> € 60 000 but less than € 130 000 > € 60 000 but less than € 200 000	> € 60 000 but less than € 5 000 000	Restricted procedure following a call for expressions of interest
≥ € 130 000	≥ € 5 000 000	Open or restricted procedure with publication of a contract notice in the Official Journal
≥ € 200 000		
Service contracts under Annex IIB to Directive 2004/18/EC ¹⁰ (> € 60 000 with no upper limit)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiated procedure following publication of a contract notice in the Official Journal • Restricted procedure following a call for expressions of interest

¹⁰ See Annex IV.2 to the Vade Mecum

In the “*open procedure*” any interested economic operator may submit a tender. In the “*restricted procedure*”, only invited candidates may submit a tender. In the “*negotiated procedure*”, the contracting authorities may consult the economic operators of their choice and negotiate the terms of contract with one or more of them.

The application of these rules secures for the EP a better allocation of economic resources and a more rational use of public funds (public authorities obtaining products and services of the highest available quality at the best price under keener competition).

The sole existence of this formalism (issuing standard documents before implementing the budget) and of the separation of duties between the authorising officer and the accounting officer helps to implement the budget in an efficient way. But the existence of particular forms of control strengthens this efficiency.

6.2.2. Different controls on the efficient implementation of the budget

Regarding controls of the budget, the European Parliament uses external and internal controls as well as internal audit. External controls are done by entities which are independent from the structure controlled. Internal control designates all policies and procedures conceived, put in place and implemented by a structure to provide reasonable assurance regarding the achievement of objectives and the regularity of the operations. Internal audit assesses the suitability of the internal management system, advises the institution on dealing with risks and reviews the functional and operational systems.

6.2.2.1 EP external controls of the budget

EP financial management has to comply with external control procedures, such as:

1. *The Committee on Budgetary Control* is one of the EP committees and is particularly responsible for:
 - a. The control of the implementation of the budget of the Union and the decisions on discharge to be taken by Parliament, including the internal discharge procedure;
 - b. The closure, presenting and auditing of the accounts and balance sheets of the Union and its institutions;
 - c. The Financial Regulation as far as the implementation, management and control of the budget are concerned.
2. *The Court of Auditors*: The European Court of Auditors is the EU Institution established by the Treaty to carry out the audit of EU finances. As the EU’s external auditor it contributes to improving EU financial management and acts as the independent guardian of the financial interests of the citizens of the Union.
3. *The European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF)*: OLAF protects the financial interests of the European Union, to fight fraud, corruption and any other irregular activity, including misconduct within the European Institutions. In pursuing this mission in an accountable, transparent and cost-effective manner, OLAF aims to provide a quality service to the citizens of Europe. OLAF achieves its mission by conducting, with full independence, internal and external investigations.

6.2.2.2 EP internal controls of the budget

Internal control can be either ex-ante (control before any decision taken by the authorising officer) or ex-post (control after the implementation of the decision). A balance has to be struck between the necessity to implement the best internal control system and the necessity not to weigh down the proceedings. Thus, the EP has chosen to impose systematic ex-ante controls, whereas ex-post controls are optional.¹¹ The use of an electronic tool FINORD also helps with implementing these controls.

– Ex-ante controls and the “four eyes principle”

In the EP, the internal control system ensures that each budgetary transaction is processed by at least three different members of staff: a staff member responsible for the initiation, a staff member responsible for ex-ante verifications and the responsible authorising officer. This system is called the “four eyes principle”, referring to the fact that each financial transaction is checked by several officials.

In fact, authorising officers are assisted in their decision-making process on how to manage the funds made available to their own DG according to the financial rules, by some officials (*financial and sometimes operational initiators*), who have been appointed to prepare operations, including supporting documents, and to carry out the necessary quality checks before operations are authorised by authorising officers.

A **finance unit** has also been created in all DGs and its main duties include centralisation of budget-related information, but also ex-ante verifications and financial archiving of all budget-related procedures. These ex-ante verifications are done by *ex-ante financial or operational verifiers* who check all the operational and financial aspects of budget transactions, according to standard checklists that have been established by each DG. The checks carried out can therefore give authorising officers the assurance that transactions comply with their instructions and with the principles of legality, regularity and sound financial management. On the basis of the proposal and supporting documents submitted by initiators, the verifiers may give or withhold approval and make observations.

– Possible ex-post controls

Moreover, ex-post controls can also be organised within the DGs. Ex-post checks differ from ex-ante checks because ex-post checks are secondary to ex-ante checks, linked to risk assessment, optional and must be carried out on the basis of a sampling system. They can be done either by an independent ex-post verification structure, or by the existing supervisory structure (ex-ante verification). In that latter case, care must be taken to ensure that ex-post verifiers do not carry out ex-post checks on operations that they themselves have verified in their capacity as ex-ante verifiers.

– FINORD

All these operations (establishing or implementing the EP budget by issuing recovery orders, commitments and payment orders) are now electronically treated on FINORD, which is a budgetary management and accountability application for authorising officers. The roles of initiator, ex-ante verification staff and authorising officers have distinct profiles in FINORD. The profile defines permissions for data access and the right to manipulate them in each case.

¹¹ For more information see article 60 and the EP minimum standards of internal control.

6.2.2.3 EP internal audit function

To complete the effectiveness of the control in the EP, nine internal auditors have been appointed. They have to provide independent, objective assurance and consulting services designed to add value and improve the operations of the Parliament. They help the Parliament to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach in order to evaluate and make recommendations for improving the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes, not only regarding budgetary issues, but more generally towards all activities managed by the EP. Internal audit promotes a culture of efficient and effective management within the Parliament and its Directorates, but does not, contrary to internal control, interfere with the daily management of operations.

7

7. Parliamentary Communication

As the representative of the interests of Europe's citizens, the European Parliament has a duty to communicate what Europe is about and to articulate and act upon citizens' interests in Europe. Contrary to national parliaments, which do not have vast communication departments, the EP has one such specific department where 660 people are employed. Parliament has repeatedly made detailed proposals for improving the relationship between the EU and its citizens and has proclaimed a determination to make the European system more accessible and visible to European citizens as part of the effort to improve the legitimacy of the EU. During the past years, the EP has tried to ensure a high level of openness and transparency in its work and to increase public awareness of its role in the EU, using more and more new technologies.

7.1 A parliament close to citizens

Being close to citizens means that citizens need to have easy access to information. They can find some information in the national offices of the EP, have access to parliamentary documents and visit the Parliament. One can notice that even if the EP uses traditional ways of communication, it is always trying to improve its services by creating, for example, a new visitors' centre which opened to the public in October 2011. It is open seven days a week year round (see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/parlamentarium>).

7.1.1 Improving public awareness

7.1.1.1 Traditional ways of communication

The European Parliament organises **events and communication campaigns** targeted either at the general public, at certain groups of opinion makers or internally focused campaigns and events. It has also published informative publications on the EP for the general public, such as leaflets, brochures, posters and promotional materials.

A special unit is also in charge of communicating with citizens, using both traditional and more up-to-date means, to provide information, answer their questions and, where possible, solve their problems. This unit responds to **requests from the public** addressed to the Parliament and to its President by post (20 letters per day) and by electronic tools in all official languages. It provides the public with current information on Parliament's position regarding the latest subjects, contributing thus to establishing a closer relationship with the citizen and enhancing the visibility of the institution.

The Parliament devotes considerable efforts to ensuring that **press, television and radio journalists** can have access to the institution. Pressrooms and facilities for holding press conferences are found both in Brussels and in Strasbourg as well as fully equipped TV and radio studios. A press briefing is held every Friday before the plenary week in Strasbourg to inform journalists of the programme of the next session. All information is provided in the 23 languages by 23 EP press officers to the 1 200 accredited journalists to the European Union or other journalists working for national newspapers.

7.1.1.2 A presence in all member states

The European Parliament has 27 information offices located in the capitals of the Member States and five extra offices in Marseille, Milan, Barcelona, Edinburgh and Munich. These information

offices act as intermediaries between Parliament and the public and are responsible for providing information to the public. More precisely, their role is to raise awareness of the European Parliament and the European Union in general. Every year, they answer thousands of enquiries, distribute publications and attend exhibitions throughout the country. They liaise with the national press and keep the media informed of news stories from the European Parliament. They also work closely with teachers, educationalists and organisations involved in promoting active citizenship to produce and distribute free educational resources about the European Parliament and the EU generally. They develop links with trade bodies, professions, large and small companies, non-governmental organisations and anyone else who has an interest in European affairs and the role of the European Parliament.

7.1.1.3 A special service to welcome visitors

The EP also directly connects to the now over half a million citizens per year who visit their parliament, either in Strasbourg or in Brussels, in groups or individually. Visitors can be invited by Members. A special Unit has been created which is responsible for receiving and briefing these visitors on the political role and functioning of Parliament and for engaging citizens in discussions. There are about 7 500 group visits organised by the Unit annually and they are conducted in all official EU languages.

In 2005, the Bureau approved the creation of an **EP Visitors' Centre** in the socio-cultural space of the Willy Brandt building. With the creation of a new Visitors' Centre called the *Parlamentarium* the EP considerably extended and upgraded the services offered to visitors. The objective was to create a modern, state-of-the-art visitors' centre offering an insight into the history, functioning and work of the EP in a pleasant and stimulating way. The target audience comprises both traditional EP visitor groups and casual visitors/tourists without accreditation. Entrance is free and it is accessible seven days a week. In the first 12 months since its opening in October 2011, the *Parlamentarium* was visited by 250 000 people, making it one of the top tourist attractions in Brussels. It has also received several awards. With 6 000 m² it is the largest parliamentary visitors centre in Europe.

7.1.2. Transparency in the EP

The Parliament has constantly been a staunch supporter of transparency. Its Rules of Procedures state that: "(...) Parliament shall ensure that its activities are conducted with the utmost transparency (...)" (Rule 103). Two facets of the EP's transparency have to be distinguished: parliament's meetings have become progressively more open to the public and public access to the documents has been further developed.

7.1.2.1 Parliament's meetings are open to the public

Plenary sessions have always been open to the public. But before direct elections in 1979, committee meetings were closed. Progressively, some committees have been opened to the public and since 1999, it is obligatory for committees to meet in public. There are only a few exceptions to that principle. For example, discussions on requests to waive a member's immunity are closed to the public and committees may decide to discuss certain designated matters behind closed doors as long as such a decision is taken when the agenda of the meeting is adopted, at the latest.

Parliament's minutes of the debates and all texts adopted, are by definition part of the public domain. But some questions have been raised regarding the accessibility of draft reports or working documents which are only available at committee meetings. In 2001, a generalised system of public access to EU documents was introduced. All the EU documents are available unless

the institution can justify confidentiality of the document. Today, the parliament maintains a public register of all its documents.

Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001,¹² from 30 May 2001 established the general principles that rule the public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents. According to this regulation, all EU documents are available unless the institution can justify confidentiality of the document. Since then, a generalised system of public access to EU documents has been introduced.

In November 2001, the European Parliament Bureau adopted rules that provide for the full implementation of the aforementioned Regulation. It stipulates that “all documents drawn up or received by the European Parliament under the legislative procedure must be accessible to citizens in electronic form, subject to the restrictions laid down in Articles 4 and 9 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.” These exceptions are related to the protection of public interest (public security, defence or military matters), of the integrity of the individual, of court proceedings or if documents relate to a matter where the decision has not yet been taken by the institution. However, the Regulation has also established that this exception might only apply to some parts of a document and that in any case this exception has time limits.

In order to allow all interested parties to follow proceedings in detail and have access to up to date information the European Parliament has also set up an internet platform called OEIL, the **Legislative Observatory** of the European Parliament which can be accessed at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/>.

The Legislative Observatory database was set up in 1994 as a tool for monitoring the EU institutional decision-making process, with a particular focus on the European Parliament’s role. The website has now expanded to include more information on Parliament’s activities, involving not only its legislative but also its budgetary powers, its right of initiative, its power to endorse appointments, etc. The Legislative Observatory publishes comprehensive records in English and French, known as “procedure files”. Each procedure file provides a centralised, frequently updated record of information on the different key players, events and documents in an individual procedure dossier. Files of ongoing procedures also contain forecasts for future stages such as foreseen dates for the plenary vote. In addition to document references, links and other useful information, the procedure files also contain factual, politically neutral summaries of major documents and events in a procedure. This helps to give readers a better understanding of the whole process at all stages. The website contains records for all procedures still ongoing – irrespective of when they began – and all procedures that have completed their passage through Parliament since the beginning of the fourth parliamentary term in July 1994.

The start page of OEIL also contains a section providing real time access to the most recent files which the EP has received from the European Commission which are not directly linked to legislation and even before a parliamentary committee may decide to deal with this document.

Should a document not be available in this database, any citizen has the right to contact the EP secretariat. The request will be dealt with by the Unit for Transparency - Public Access to Documents which is to supply the requested documents within a general period of 15 working days from the registration of the application, unless the specific exceptions outlined above apply. The decision by any EU institution in relation to access to documents is subject to review by the European Ombudsman and at the last resort the European Court of Justice.

¹² http://www.europarl.europa.eu/register/pdf/r1049_en.pdf

7.2. A more intensive use of new technologies

During the last few years, EP communication has significantly evolved. In a modern world, it is of the utmost importance to make the best use of modern technologies. In this respect, an entire range of new tools has been developed:

- The [website](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/) <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/> gives general information on the EP, its Members, all documents, votes and news from the Parliament; all plenary and most committee meetings are streamed live on the website. It receives some 60 000 visits daily;
- A special web TV (**Europarl TV**) was also created by the EP in 2008, reporting in a journalistic format about what is happening and being decided upon in Parliament.

In the run-up to the 2009 elections parliament developed communication through **social media** such as Youtube, Twitter and Facebook and the photo sharing site Flickr. On Facebook, the EP was one of the first parliaments worldwide to have its own page, and by the end of 2012 more than 500 000 people follow the Parliament on Facebook and interact through its page which is updated several times daily. The web communication unit managing the page also regularly organises live chats with MEPs on the page in order to discuss key legislation or other topical issues.

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8. Services and support for MEPs and staff

The following chapter provides some information regarding the main facilities which assist Members and staff in their duties.

8.1 Languages

Firmly rooted in the European Treaties, multilingualism reflects the European Union's cultural and linguistic diversity while at the same time making the European institutions more accessible and transparent for the general public.

Within the General Secretariat of the Parliament, the working languages amongst staff are English and French and, to a limited extent, German. But the European Parliament differs from the other EU institutions through its obligation to ensure the highest possible degree of multilingualism. All EU citizens must be able to refer to legislation directly concerning them in the language of their country.

Furthermore, since every European citizen has the right to stand for election to the European Parliament, it is unreasonable to require Members to have a perfect command of one of the more widely-spoken languages. In a democratic body such as the European Parliament, all opinions are equally valid and worth considering. Each representative has the right to speak, hear and write in their native language, a right which lies at the very heart of Parliament's democratic legitimacy. This is necessary to ensure a fair representation of all EU citizens and their interests. The right of each Member to read parliamentary documents, to follow debates and to speak in their own language is expressly recognised in Parliament's Rules of Procedure.

In addition, in its role as legislator, the European Parliament is obliged to guarantee that the linguistic quality of all the laws which it adopts is beyond reproach in all official languages.

Treaties stipulate that Member States themselves decide which languages should be the official languages of the institutions. They lay down as fundamental principles that EU legislation shall be translated into all official languages and that the European institutions may each decide which of the languages are to be used in specific cases (for example, in their internal discussions). The use of languages in documents, sittings and committee meetings of the European Parliament is mainly dealt with in Rule 146, the first paragraph of which states: "*All documents of Parliament shall be drawn up in the official languages*".

The 23 official languages produce 506 possible combinations, since each language can be translated into 22 others. In order to meet this challenge, the European Parliament has highly efficient interpretation, translation and legal text verification services. Very strict rules have been put in place to guarantee the efficiency of these services whilst keeping costs at a reasonable level.

But with 23 official languages and 506 combinations of languages, translation and interpretation are a major challenge. Draft reports, final reports, amendments, draft opinions, working documents, final opinions, minutes and agendas of the committee documents are translated into all the official languages; final reports, amendments, resolutions, joint resolutions, questions for Question Time, questions for oral answers and minutes for plenary meetings are also translated into all the official languages. The Verbatim Report of Proceedings is also translated into all official languages.

Bureau documents and documents for the Quaestors are translated into the languages of the members concerned.

Moreover, MEPs, through the secretariat of their committee, delegation or political group, can request a translation of all texts directly connected with the political activities of the European Parliament (for example, questions to the Commission or Council, draft reports or opinions, amendments to reports or opinions, reports of delegation visits, etc.). EP Vice-Presidents, Quaestors, Committee chairpersons, Political group coordinators, Rapporteurs, Shadow rapporteurs, Draftspersons for an opinion and Shadow draftspersons for an opinion can also ask for an “Interpretation ad Personam”, which means that a personal interpreter will accompany them during their meetings.

Moreover, it should be noted that the EP has adhered to the Code of Conduct on Multilingualism since 2004, and a new one entered into force on 1 January 2009. More information on the Code of Conduct can be found at:

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/multilinguisme/code_conduct_multilingualism_en.pdf.

8.1.1 Translation

The Directorate-General for Translation and the Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences are in charge of the linguistic issues. The mission of the Directorate-General for Translation is to assist the Parliament with the multilingual exchange of written information by producing high-speed, high-quality translations and publications for MEPs and the general public, whereas the Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences deals with the interpretation of what members say in plenary sittings or other meetings.

Parliament employs around 650 translators whose job it is to translate into all official languages several categories of documents, including:

- plenary and committee documents: agendas, draft reports, amendments, adopted reports, opinions, resolutions, written and oral questions, minutes and reports of proceedings, notices to Members, etc;
- documents of other political bodies, such as the joint parliamentary assemblies consisting of Members of the European Parliament and national MPs or elected representatives of third countries;
- decisions by the European Ombudsman;
- information for the citizen and for the Member States;
- decisions of Parliament’s governing bodies (Bureau, Conference of Presidents, Quaestors).

As a general rule, the translators translate into their mother tongue. However, it is sometimes difficult to find someone able to translate from a given source language into a given target language, especially in the case of the least widely spoken languages in the Union. To translate texts written in these languages, the European Parliament has therefore put in place a system of ‘relay’ languages: a text is first translated into one of the more widely used languages (English, French or German) and from there into the target language. Other widely used European languages (Italian, Polish and Spanish) could also become relay languages in due course.

8.1.2 Interpretation

Whereas translators work with the written word, interpreters facilitate verbal communication, either simultaneously or consecutively, between users of different languages.

According to the Rules of Procedure “all members shall have the right to speak in Parliament in the official language of their choice. Speeches delivered in one of the official languages shall be simultaneously interpreted into the other official languages.”

The European Parliament’s Directorate-General for Interpretation and Conferences (DG INTE) employs approximately 360 staff interpreters and has at its disposal a reserve of some 3 000 freelance interpreters whom it calls on as required.

Interpreting is needed mainly for:

- plenary sittings;
- meetings of EP committees, parliamentary delegations, joint parliamentary assemblies;
- meetings of political groups;
- press conferences;
- meetings of Parliament’s governing bodies (Bureau, Conference of Presidents, etc.).

Between 900 and 1 000 interpreters are available for the plenary sittings of Parliament, at which simultaneous interpretation is provided from and into all the EU’s official languages. For other meetings, interpretation is provided as required and increasingly into non-EU official languages.

In principle, an interpreter works into their mother tongue. But with 506 possible language combinations, it is not always possible to find someone who can interpret from a given language into another and in such cases a relay system is used, whereby the interpretation from one language to another passes through a third, known as the ‘pivot’ or relay language.

8.1.3 Verification of legal texts

It is vital that the legislative texts adopted by the European Parliament are identical from a legal point of view in all languages. To ensure that this is the case, the European Parliament recruits highly specialised staff trained in both law and languages. The European Parliament employs around 170 lawyer-linguists who ensure the legal, linguistic and technical concordance and finalisation of legislative and other texts throughout their passage through Parliament.

The lawyer-linguists:

- verify the linguistic quality and the legal conformity of texts put to the vote in parliamentary committees and subsequently in plenary sittings;
- check and register the amendments tabled;
- provide Members with information and advice on all theoretical and practical aspects of parliamentary procedures from the initial drafting of texts to final adoption in plenary;
- prepare voting lists for all documents put to the vote in plenary.

8.2 Protocol

Within the Directorate-General for the Presidency, the Protocol service is a functional but essential aspect of international relations, however, members are not always familiar with the subtleties. Protocol’s main tasks are to assist the President and parliamentary bodies on protocol issues for official, working and courtesy visits, for meetings of joint committees and delegations and to make arrangements, in conjunction with the President’s Cabinet, for the President’s travel to EU Member States and third countries. It also provides information to Members about receptions and official events organised by Parliament and deals with visa formalities for missions of Members and officials outside of the EU.

8.3 Library

The quality of the parliamentary work often depends on the information available for in-depth research. The library provides a rapid, non-partisan information service to everyone in the European Parliament community. It is an internal service, dedicated to the Parliament, with no duty to external researchers or visitors to the Parliament, except for its historical services.

Everyone working in the EP (Members, MEPs' assistants, political groups, Secretariat-General, trainees...) has the right to an effective and efficient Library service to support their parliamentary work and the development of professional knowledge and skills. They have the right of access to the reading room, which contains a large collection of books and reference works regarding the main European policies and institutions and the general economic, social and political situation in the Member States. They also have the right to borrow books and seek information assistance and to receive information training from Library staff. More advanced information research and other added value services are provided to the President and individual Members performing their parliamentary duties (or staff acting for them in pursuit of those duties), committees, rapporteurs, recognised persons acting for them or to the Secretary-General or any other service or person in the EP community pursuing legislative work or work classed as a corporate priority. The Library's website, accessible from any computer connected to the Parliament's network, provides access to a wide variety of online sources. Furthermore, the EP library staff maintain a public blog, highlighting many of the documents and services provided for Members (<http://libraryeuroparl.wordpress.com>).

8.4 IT services

DG ITEC provides IT support for Members and staff of the European Parliament through its Service Desk. This Desk handles all requests for assistance, forwards them to the appropriate level for response and keeps users informed of actions taken to deal with them. DG ITEC also provides users with a telephone support service for any problems relating to telecommunications. The European Parliament also makes several videoconference rooms available. Members and staff can access and synchronise their emails (and electronic agendas and contacts) on smart phones and access the internet not only in offices but also in most meeting rooms in the Parliament.

8.5 Printing facilities

The main duty of the Printing Unit is having all the legislative work and additional documents printed in the 23 official languages while meeting the quality, time, financial and environmental (EMAS) requirements.

While digital printing facilities are available at all three EP sites, the Printing Unit provides a one-stop publishing service ranging from graphic design, layout, colour printing, finishing and distribution. It has central responsibility for administration and print management, computer graphics, offset printing and finishing. When it does not have the capacity for a given print-run or special techniques, the Unit will contract the job out. The Digital Printing service also carries out duplication and deals with various publications, stationery and other documents that require more than mere duplication.

The annual print output amounts to some 150 million pages reproduced on fast printers and heavy-duty photocopiers and 32 million pages printed by the offset printing shop in Luxembourg.

8.6 Chauffeur Service

Members can make use of Parliament's Drivers' Service on the days when Parliament's official bodies meet in Brussels or Strasbourg, operating on the main working days from 7:00 or 8:00 until 23:00. Their use is, however, limited to journeys within a 20 km radius of the place of work, directly to or from Parliament's premises. Journeys between Parliament and the airport or train station have priority.

Service cars and hired vehicles with drivers are available to MEPs also for missions associated with the exercise of their parliamentary mandate. To limit the number of service cars, Members may also use taxis and obtain reimbursement of their expenses of up to € 50 for taxi journeys on the days on which they are on official business in Brussels or Strasbourg.

9

9. Architecture and seats

9.1 For historical reasons, the EP is based in three different cities

9.1.1 A location in three different cities for historical reasons

For historical reasons, namely as a symbol of the reconciliation between France and Germany, Strasbourg was chosen as the official seat. For practical reasons, namely the proximity of the other EU institutions and the fact that committee meetings take place in Brussels which also hosts one of the world's largest press corps, the parliamentary and communication services of the General Secretariat are located in Brussels. The more administrative part of the General Secretariat is based in Luxembourg.

This geographical division is the product of compromises struck by the European Member States during the gradual evolution of the European Union. It is not uncontroversial and it is often criticised for being impractical and costly but the seat of the European Parliament is fixed by Member States and could only be altered if all governments were to agree. Since the Treaty of Amsterdam (signed in 1997) the seat of EU institutions is legally regulated by a protocol annexed to the Treaty, stipulating: "Parliament shall have its seat in Strasbourg, where the 12 periods of monthly plenary sessions, including the budget session, shall be held. The periods of additional plenary sessions shall be held in Brussels. The committees of the European Parliament shall meet in Brussels. The General Secretariat of the European Parliament and its departments shall remain in Luxembourg."

Strasbourg

Since the founding of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) in 1951, the Assembly has been based in Strasbourg, using until 1978 the plenary chamber of the Council of Europe. Despite criticisms related to the cost of having three locations for the parliament, Strasbourg remains the official seat of Parliament. The plenary chamber used since 1979 became too small after several EU enlargements and a new one was built and inaugurated in 1999. About 100 EP staff are based permanently in Strasbourg.

Luxembourg

When the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was founded in 1951, the states could not agree which city should function as the host. Luxembourg was suggested as a provisional option for the new institutions except for the Assembly which was to be based in Strasbourg. In 1957, when the European Economic Community and Euratom were created, a temporary agreement was found that spread the different bodies even further geographically: the Parliamentary Assembly would meet in Strasbourg, the Courts would meet in Luxembourg, and the Commission and Council would be split between Luxembourg and Brussels. Nevertheless, during the 1970s Luxembourg hosted up to six plenary sessions per year, as well as most of the staff employed by the secretariat and the political groups.

Over the course of the years, activities in Luxembourg gradually shifted to Brussels and the Parliament, although bound to remain in Strasbourg, also started to work in Brussels, holding group and committee meetings there, while the Courts remained in Luxembourg. Nowadays, about 2 500 people from services such as human resources, finance and translation are working for the Secretariat in Luxembourg.

Brussels

Brussels has become home to nearly all major EU institutions and also the majority of Parliament's work is now being carried out there. The Parliament gradually moved its main decision-making bodies to Brussels where nowadays almost all committee and political group meetings take place. In 1989 construction started on a chamber, allowing for some of the part-sessions to take place in Brussels. Most of Parliament's buildings in Brussels were built in the 1990s: the Paul Henri Spaak building, which houses the Brussels plenary chamber as well as the offices of the EP President and Secretary-General, was inaugurated in 1993 while the biggest building, named after the Italian MEP Altiero Spinelli, containing MEP and staff offices as well as meeting rooms, was finished in 1997. These days, more than 6 000 people have their main place of work in Brussels, including MEPs, their assistants, political group staff, the officials of the General Secretariat and employees of external service suppliers (catering, security, shops, banks etc.).

9.1.2 Presentation of the buildings

Maps of the buildings

Maps of the numerous Parliament buildings that are located in the three different cities can be found on the website of the European Parliament.

- Strasbourg: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/visit/stra.pdf> ;
- Brussels: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/visit/bru.pdf> ;
- Luxembourg: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/visit/lux.pdf> .

An architecture which symbolises transparency and helps to facilitate the work of Members and staff

The architecture and locations chosen for the EP buildings are very symbolic. Beyond being a simple technical project, the construction of the buildings of a Parliament has a political meaning. The work and activities of a Parliament have to be transparent for the citizens and the buildings of the European Parliament reflect this quest for transparency. The structures of the main buildings are in glass, meaning that every citizen in the town can see and control the activity of their parliament. It also shows that the Parliament has nothing to hide. Another example of this symbolism is the deliberately unfinished-looking aspect of the 60m high tower in Strasbourg. On the one hand, it stands for Europe as a work-in-progress. On the other, as this part is oriented eastwards, it signalled the future enlargement towards the East at a time when no Eastern European country had yet joined the EU.

The work of Members and staff is facilitated by the internal functional organisation of the buildings:

- *Work facilities*: Members sit in a hemicycle with desks which are equipped with a microphone, headphones for interpretation and electronic voting equipment. Interpretation booths are located behind the Members and along the side of the chamber, while public galleries are located above the chamber around the entire perimeter. Numerous meeting rooms and a media centre for journalists have been built;
- *Other facilities*: restaurants, a hairdresser and even a sports centre had been foreseen before the construction of the buildings. Everything is structured in such a way as to allow Members and staff to stay on the EP premises all day long.

9.2 Special practicalities of the EP's buildings

9.2.1 Enlargement and construction of new buildings

The enlargement of the EU has raised a number of issues regarding buildings. In fact, from six Member States to 27, and from 78 Members in 1958 to 754 today, the EU has changed and the European Parliament has had to be adapted accordingly.

Due to new Members, the Parliament needed a larger hemicycle to hold debates, to have seats for Members, booths for the interpretation of new official languages and more office space for MEPs and their newly recruited staff. To these ends, new buildings have been constructed in Brussels such as the Spinelli building which was completed in 1997, while the last phase of the extension including the Antall and Brandt buildings was concluded in the course of 2008.

9.2.2 Renting or owning the buildings?

It is possible to choose to rent or to own the buildings. If a Parliament chooses to rent, it has to pay for this rent. If it chooses to own its buildings, it has to pay for the maintenance.

The EP has decided to become the owner of its own buildings. It has chosen during the years to rent buildings with a possibility to buy them without any financial sanction. It now owns almost all of its buildings.

9.2.3 Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)

The European Parliament has recognised that it has a duty to make a positive contribution to sustainable development as a long-term goal, not only through its political role and its role in legislative procedures, but also in the context of how it operates and the logistical decisions that it makes on a day-to-day basis.

The Bureau therefore launched the EMAS project in the Parliament with its decision of 19 April 2004. The President and Secretary-General signed the Parliament's Environmental Policy which contains guidelines for its own environmental management system, including:

- reducing carbon dioxide emissions;
- promoting the efficient use of energy, water and paper and reducing of waste;
- incorporating environmental guidelines into procurement procedures;
- ensuring appropriate behaviour and commitment through training and by increasing awareness;
- taking preventive measures to counter pollution;
- ensuring compliance with the necessary requirements;
- providing sufficient resources for its environmental management system;
- promoting transparent communication and dialogue.

In 2007, the first external audit was completed and the European Parliament obtained the ISO 14001.2004 certification.

ANNEX



ANNEX I – Consolidated version of the Act concerning the election of the representatives of the Assembly by direct universal suffrage annexed to the Council decision of 20 September 1976, and of the subsequent amendments thereto

ACT¹³

concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage

Article 1

1. In each Member State, members of the European Parliament shall be elected on the basis of proportional representation, using the list system or the single transferable vote.
2. Member States may authorise voting based on a preferential list system in accordance with the procedure they adopt.
3. Elections shall be by direct universal suffrage and shall be free and secret.

Article 2

In accordance with its specific national situation, each Member State may establish constituencies for elections to the European Parliament or subdivide its electoral area in a different manner, without generally affecting the proportional nature of the voting system.

Article 3

Member States may set a minimum threshold for the allocation of seats. At national level this threshold may not exceed 5 per cent of votes cast.

Article 4

Each Member State may set a ceiling for candidates' campaign expenses.

Article 5

1. The five-year term for which members of the European Parliament are elected shall begin at the opening of the first session following each election.
It may be extended or curtailed pursuant to the second subparagraph of Article 10 (2).
2. The term of office of each member shall begin and end at the same time as the period referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 6

1. Members of the European Parliament shall vote on an individual and personal basis. They shall not be bound by any instructions and shall not receive a binding mandate.
2. Members of the European Parliament shall enjoy the privileges and immunities applicable to them by virtue of the Protocol of 8 April 1965 on the privileges and immunities of the European Communities.

¹³ NB : This document is a consolidation produced by the Legal Service of the European Parliament on the basis of the ACT concerning the election of the representatives of the Assembly by direct universal suffrage (OJ L 278, 8.10.1976, p. 5), as amended by Decision 93/81/Euratom, CECA, CEE amending the Act concerning the election of the representatives of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage, annexed to Council Decision 76/787/CECA, CEE, Euratom of 20 September 1976 (OJ L 33, 9.2.1993, p. 15), and Council Decision 2002/772/CE, Euratom of 25 June 2002 and 23 September 2002 (OJ L 283, 21.10.2002, p. 1). It differs from the consolidated version produced by the Publications Office of the European Union (CONSLEG. 1976X1008-23/09/2002) on two points: it incorporates an indent to Article 6 paragraph 1 ' - Committee of the Regions' resulting from Article 5 of the Treaty of Amsterdam (OJ C 340, 10.11.1997) and is renumbered in accordance with Article 2 paragraph 1 of Council Decision 2002/772/CE, Euratom.

Article 7

1. The office of member of the European Parliament shall be incompatible with that of:
 - member of the government of a Member State,
 - member of the Commission of the European Communities,
 - Judge, Advocate-General or Registrar of the Court of Justice of the European Communities or of the Court of First Instance,
 - member of the Board of Directors of the European Central Bank,
 - member of the Court of Auditors of the European Communities,
 - Ombudsman of the European Communities,
 - member of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Community and of the European Atomic Energy Community,
 - member of the Committee of the Regions,
 - member of committees or other bodies set up pursuant to the Treaties establishing the European Community and the European Atomic Energy Community for the purposes of managing the Communities' funds or carrying out a permanent direct administrative task,
 - member of the Board of Directors, Management Committee or staff of the European Investment Bank,
 - active official or servant of the institutions of the European Communities or of the specialised bodies attached to them or of the European Central Bank.
2. From the European Parliament elections in 2004, the office of member of the European Parliament shall be incompatible with that of member of a national parliament.
By way of derogation from that rule and without prejudice to paragraph 3:
 - members of the Irish National Parliament who are elected to the European Parliament at a subsequent poll may have a dual mandate until the next election to the Irish National Parliament, at which juncture the first subparagraph of this paragraph shall apply;
 - members of the United Kingdom Parliament who are also members of the European Parliament during the five-year term preceding election to the European Parliament in 2004 may have a dual mandate until the 2009 European Parliament elections, when the first subparagraph of this paragraph shall apply.
3. In addition, each Member State may, in the circumstances provided for in Article 8, extend rules at national level relating to incompatibility.
4. Members of the European Parliament to whom paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 become applicable in the course of the five-year period referred to in Article 5 shall be replaced in accordance with Article 13.

Article 8

Subject to the provisions of this Act, the electoral procedure shall be governed in each Member State by its national provisions.

These national provisions, which may if appropriate take account of the specific situation in the Member States, shall not affect the essentially proportional nature of the voting system.

Article 9

No one may vote more than once in any election of members of the European Parliament.

Article 10

1. Elections to the European Parliament shall be held on the date and at the times fixed by each Member State; for all Member States this date shall fall within the same period starting on a Thursday morning and ending on the following Sunday.

2. Member States may not officially make public the results of their count until after the close of polling in the Member State whose electors are the last to vote within the period referred to in paragraph 1.

Article 11

1. The Council, acting unanimously after consulting the European Parliament, shall determine the electoral period for the first elections.
2. Subsequent elections shall take place in the corresponding period in the last year of the five-year period referred to in Article 5.
Should it prove impossible to hold the elections in the Community during that period, the Council acting unanimously shall, after consulting the European Parliament, determine, at least one month¹⁴ before the end of the five-year term referred to in Article 5, another electoral period which shall not be more than two months before or one month after the period fixed pursuant to the preceding subparagraph.
3. Without prejudice to Article 196 of the Treaty establishing the European Community and Article 109 of the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community, the European Parliament shall meet, without requiring to be convened, on the first Tuesday after expiry of an interval of one month from the end of the electoral period.
4. The powers of the European Parliament shall cease upon the opening of the first sitting of the new European Parliament.

Article 12

The European Parliament shall verify the credentials of members of the European Parliament. For this purpose it shall take note of the results declared officially by the Member States and shall rule on any disputes which may arise out of the provisions of this Act other than those arising out of the national provisions to which the Act refers.

Article 13

1. A seat shall fall vacant when the mandate of a member of the European Parliament ends as a result of resignation, death or withdrawal of the mandate.
2. Subject to the other provisions of this Act, each Member State shall lay down appropriate procedures for filling any seat which falls vacant during the five-year term of office referred to in Article 5 for the remainder of that period.
3. Where the law of a Member State makes explicit provision for the withdrawal of the mandate of a member of the European Parliament, that mandate shall end pursuant to those legal provisions. The competent national authorities shall inform the European Parliament thereof.
4. Where a seat falls vacant as a result of resignation or death, the President of the European Parliament shall immediately inform the competent authorities of the Member State concerned thereof.

Article 14

Should it appear necessary to adopt measures to implement this Act, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the European Parliament after consulting the Commission, shall adopt such measures after endeavouring to reach agreement with the European Parliament in a conciliation committee consisting of the Council and representatives of the European Parliament.

¹⁴ In the versions of Decision 2002/772/CE, Euratom as published in the Official Journal, other than the English and Spanish versions, this period is stated to be one year.

Article 15

This Act is drawn up in the Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Irish, Italian, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish languages, all the texts being equally authentic.

Annexes I and II shall form an integral part of this Act.

Article 16

The provisions of this Act shall enter into force on the first day of the month following that during which the last of the notifications referred to in the Decision is received.

Udfærdiget i Bruxelles, den tyvende september nitten hundrede og seksoghalvfjerds.

Geschehen zu Brüssel am zwanzigsten September neunzehnhundertsechundsiebzig.

Done at Brussels on the twentieth day of September in the year one thousand nine hundred and seventy-six.

Fait à Bruxelles, le vingt septembre mil neuf cent soixante-seize.

Arna dhéanamh sa Bhruiséil, an fichiú lá de mhí Mhéan Fómhair, míle naoi gcéad seachtó a sé.

Fatto a Bruxelles, addì venti settembre millenovecentosettantasei.

Gedaan te Brussel, de twintigste september negentienhonderd zesenzeventig.

(ANNEX I

The United Kingdom will apply the provisions of this Act only in respect of the United Kingdom.

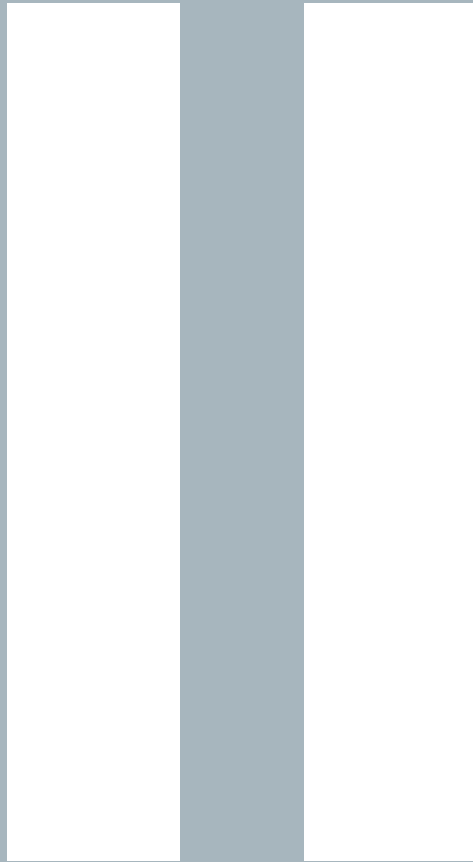
ANNEX II

Declaration on Article 14

As regards the procedure to be followed by the Conciliation Committee, it is agreed to have recourse to the provisions of paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of the procedure laid down in the joint declaration of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 4 March 1975¹⁵.

¹⁵ OJ C 89, 22. 4. 1975, p. 1.

ANNEX



ANNEX II – Decision of the European Parliament of 28 September 2005 adopting the Statute for Members of the European Parliament (2005/684/EC, Euratom)

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Community, and in particular Article 190(5) thereof,

Having regard to the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community, and in particular Article 108(4) thereof,

Having regard to the opinion of the Commission¹,

With the approval of the Council²,

Whereas:

- (1) Parliament consists of “representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community”. These representatives are, as is also affirmed in Article 190(1) of the EC Treaty, the “representatives of the peoples of the States brought together in the Community”. The same term is used in Article 190(2) of the EC Treaty (the number of representatives elected in each Member State) and in Article 190(3) of the EC Treaty (representatives shall be elected for a term of five years). These provisions, whereby Members are the representatives of the peoples, justify the use in the Statute of the term “Member”.
- (2) Parliament has the right to regulate its own business in its Rules of Procedure, in accordance with the first paragraph of Article 199 of the EC Treaty and in conformity with this Statute.
- (3) Article 1 of the Statute takes the concept of “Member” and makes it clear that the Statute does not deal with Members’ rights and obligations, but covers the rules and general conditions applicable to the exercise of their mandate.
- (4) The freedom and independence of Members, which are enshrined in Article 2 and which are not mentioned in any provision of primary law, should receive statutory protection. Undertakings made by Members to relinquish their office at a given time, or declarations of their intent to relinquish office on an unspecified date, which political parties can make use of at their discretion, should be considered as incompatible with Members’ freedom and independence and should therefore not be binding in law.
- (5) Article 3(1) reproduces in full the provisions of Article 6(1) of the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage.
- (6) The right of initiative referred to in Article 5 is the key right of every Member. Parliament’s Rules of Procedure may not render that right nugatory.
- (7) The right to inspect files, provided for in Article 6, which is already enshrined in Parliament’s Rules of Procedure, is an essential aspect of the exercise of a Member’s mandate and should therefore be provided for by the Statute.
- (8) Article 7 is intended to ensure that, despite statements to the contrary, linguistic diversity will continue to be preserved. Any discrimination against any of the official languages should be ruled out. This principle should continue to apply after any enlargement of the European Union.

1 Opinion of the Commission of 3 June 2003, confirmed by Vice-President Wallström in the course of the sitting of the European Parliament on 22 June 2005.

2 Letter from the Council of 19 July 2005.

- (9) Pursuant to Articles 9 and 10, Members are to receive a salary for performing their duties. Regarding the amount of the salary, a group of experts convened by Parliament submitted a study in May 2000, pursuant to which a salary of 38,5 % of the basic salary of a judge at the Court of Justice of the European Communities is justified.
- (10) Since the salary and transitional allowance, as well as the old-age, invalidity and survivor's pensions, are funded from the general budget of the European Union, it is appropriate for them to be subject to tax for the benefit of the Communities.
- (11) On account of Members' specific circumstances, in particular the fact that they are under no obligation to reside in any of Parliament's places of work and their specific ties to the State in which they are elected, it is appropriate to provide for the possibility for Member States to apply the provisions of their national tax law to the salary and transitional allowance as well as to the old-age, invalidity and survivor's pensions.
- (12) Article 9(3) is necessary because parties often expect the benefits referred to in Article 9(1) and (2) to be used in part for their purposes. This form of party funding should be prohibited.
- (13) The transitional allowance provided for in Articles 9(2) and 13 is intended, in particular, to bridge the period between the end of a Member's term of office and his/her taking up a new post. When the former Member takes up another mandate or assumes a public office, this purpose ceases to be relevant.
- (14) In light of the developments in the Member States regarding old-age pensions, it seems appropriate for former Members to be entitled to an old-age pension as from their 63rd birthday. Article 14 does not affect the right of the Member States to take account of old-age pensions payable under national law when calculating Members' old-age pensions.
- (15) The arrangements for provision for survivors are essentially in line with current law in the European Community. The entitlement of a surviving spouse who has remarried is based on the modern idea that it relates to a personal benefit and is not intended merely as "provision". Such an entitlement is not ruled out even when a surviving spouse is "provided for" by virtue of his or her own income or personal wealth.
- (16) Article 18 is necessary because when the Statute enters into force, Member States will cease to reimburse the costs that Members incur as a result of sickness or to pay part of medical insurance contributions. These benefits are often retained after a Member's term of office is over.
- (17) The provisions concerning the reimbursement of expenses must be in conformity with the principles set out by the Court of Justice of the European Communities in the "Lord Bruce" judgment³. Parliament is thus allowed to effect such reimbursement by means of a flat-rate sum, in those cases in which it is appropriate, in order to reduce the administrative costs and burdens inherent in a system involving the verification of each individual item of expense. This therefore represents sound administration.
- (18) On 28 May 2003, Parliament's Bureau adopted a set of new rules governing the payment of expenses and allowances to Members on the basis of expenses actually incurred, which should enter into force at the same time as this Statute.
- (19) The Member States should ensure that the rules placing Members of the European Parliament, when exercising their mandate in their Member State, on the same footing as members of the national parliament are retained. It is not possible for this problem to be solved at European level, as numerous very disparate arrangements exist in the Member States. Without such rules, the exercise of the mandate of a Member of the European Parliament in the Member State where a Member was elected would be considerably hampered, if not impossible. Effective exercise of the mandate is also in the interests of the Member States.

3 Judgment of the Court of 15 September 1981, Case 208/80, Rt. Hon. Lord Bruce of Donington v Eric Gordon Aspden [1981] ECR 2205.

- (20) Article 25(1) is required because the very disparate national provisions to which Members have so far been subject make it impossible to solve at European level all the problems associated with the transition from an old to a new European system. Giving Members a choice will make it impossible for Members' rights to be reduced or for them to suffer financial loss as a result of the transition. The rule contained in Article 25(2) is the consequence of the decision made pursuant to Article 25(1).
- (21) The diversity of national situations is addressed in Article 29, under which the Member States are allowed to adopt rules different from the provisions of this Statute as a transitional measure. That very diversity also justifies the possibility whereby Member States may retain parity of remuneration between Members of the European Parliament and members of national parliaments,

DECIDES:

TITLE I REGULATIONS AND GENERAL CONDITIONS GOVERNING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE DUTIES OF THE MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Article 1

This Statute lays down the regulations and general conditions governing the performance of the duties of Members of the European Parliament.

Article 2

1. Members shall be free and independent.
2. Agreements concerning the resignation from office of a Member before or at the end of a parliamentary term shall be null and void.

Article 3

1. Members shall vote on an individual and personal basis. They shall not be bound by any instructions and shall not receive a binding mandate.
2. Agreements concerning the way in which the mandate is to be exercised shall be null and void.

Article 4

Documents and electronic records which a Member has received, drafted or sent shall not be treated as Parliament documents unless they have been tabled in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

Article 5

1. Each Member shall be entitled to table proposals for Community acts in the context of Parliament's right of initiative.
2. Parliament shall lay down in its Rules of Procedure the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 6

1. Members shall be entitled to inspect any files held by Parliament.
2. Paragraph 1 shall not apply to personal files and accounts.
3. Paragraph 1 shall apply without prejudice to acts of the European Union and agreements by the Institutions concerning access to documents.
4. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 7

1. Parliament's documents shall be translated into all the official languages.
2. Speeches shall be interpreted simultaneously into all the other official languages.
3. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the implementation of this Article.

Article 8

1. Members may form themselves into political groups.
2. Parliament shall lay down in its Rules of Procedure the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 9

1. Members shall be entitled to an appropriate salary to safeguard their independence.
2. At the end of their term of office, they shall be entitled to a transitional allowance and a pension.
3. Agreements on the use of the salary, the transitional end-of-service allowance and the pension for other than private purposes shall be null and void.
4. The surviving dependants of Members or former Members shall be entitled to a survivor's pension.

Article 10

The amount of the salary shall be 38,5 % of the basic salary of a judge at the Court of Justice of the European Communities.

Article 11

The salary received by a Member for the exercise of a mandate in another parliament shall be offset against the salary.

Article 12

1. The salary provided for in Article 9 shall be subject to tax for the benefit of the Communities on the same terms and conditions as those laid down, on the basis of Article 13 of the Protocol on the privileges and immunities of the Communities, for the officials and other servants of the European Communities.
2. The abatements for occupational and personal expenses and those of a family and social nature, provided for in Article 3(2) to (4) of Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 260/68 of the Council of 29 February 1968 laying down the conditions and procedure for applying the tax for the benefit of the European Communities⁴, shall not be applicable.
3. Paragraph 1 shall be without prejudice to the Member States' power to make the salary subject to national tax law provisions, provided that any double taxation is avoided.
4. Member States shall have the right to take the salary into account when setting the rate of taxation applicable to other revenue.
5. This Article shall also apply to the transitional allowance as well as to the old-age, invalidity and survivor's pensions, which are paid pursuant to Articles 13, 14, 15 and 17.
6. Benefits under Articles 18, 19 and 20 and contributions to the Pension Fund under Article 27 shall not be subject to tax.

Article 13

1. At the end of their term of office Members shall be entitled to a transitional allowance equivalent to the salary pursuant to Article 10.
2. This entitlement shall continue for one month per year in which their mandate has been exercised, but not for less than six months or more than 24 months.
3. In the event of a Member's assuming a mandate in another parliament or taking public office, the transitional allowance shall be paid until the mandate starts or the public office is taken up.
4. In the event of death, the transitional allowance shall be paid for the last time in the month in which the former Member died.

⁴ OJ L 56, 4.3.1968, p. 8. Regulation as last amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 723/2004 (OJ L 124, 27.4.2004, p. 1).

Article 14

1. Former Members shall be entitled to an old-age pension from the age of 63.
2. This pension shall be, for each full year's exercise of a mandate, 3,5 % of the salary pursuant to Article 10 and one twelfth thereof for each further full month, but not more than 70 % in total.
3. Entitlement to the old-age pension shall exist irrespective of any other pension.
4. Article 11 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 15

1. Members who become incapacitated during their term of office shall be entitled to a pension.
2. Article 14(2) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. However, the amount of the pension shall be at least 35 % of the salary pursuant to Article 10.
3. The entitlement shall take effect when the Member concerned stands down.
4. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.
5. Article 11 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 16

Should a former Member be entitled simultaneously to the payment of the transitional allowance pursuant to Article 13 and the pension pursuant to Article 14 or Article 15, he or she shall decide which arrangement shall be applied.

Article 17

1. In the event of the death of a Member or of a former Member who at the time of his/her death was or would have been entitled in future to a pension pursuant to Article 14 or Article 15, the spouse and dependent children shall be entitled to a survivor's pension.
2. The total amount of the pension shall not exceed the pension to which the Member would have been entitled at the end of the parliamentary term or to which the former Member was or would have been entitled.
3. The surviving spouse shall receive 60 % of the amount referred to in paragraph 2, but in any case at least 30 % of the salary pursuant to Article 10. Such entitlement shall not be affected if the surviving spouse remarries. Such entitlement shall be forfeited if the specific circumstances of an individual case leave no reasonable doubt that the marriage was concluded solely for the purpose of securing a pension.
4. A dependent child shall receive 20 % of the amount referred to in paragraph 2.
5. Should it be necessary, the maximum amount of the pension to be paid shall be divided between the spouse and the children in the ratio of the percentages laid down in paragraphs 3 and 4.
6. The pension shall be paid from the first day of the month following the date of death.
7. Should the spouse die, the entitlement shall expire at the end of the month during which the death occurred.
8. A child's entitlement shall expire at the end of the month in which he/she reaches the age of 21. However, it shall continue for the duration of education or vocational training, but shall expire at the latest at the end of the month during which he/she reaches the age of 25. The entitlement shall continue if the child is unable to support himself/herself on account of sickness or infirmity.
9. Partners from relationships recognised in the Member States shall be treated as equivalent to spouses.
10. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 18

1. Members and former Members drawing a pension, and persons entitled to the survivor's pension, shall be entitled to reimbursement of two thirds of the costs that they incur as a result of sickness, pregnancy or the birth of a child.
2. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 19

1. Members shall be entitled to insurance cover for the risks connected with the exercise of their mandate.
2. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right. Members shall pay one third of the resulting insurance premiums.

Article 20

1. Members shall be entitled to reimbursement of expenses incurred in the exercise of their mandate.
2. Parliament shall reimburse the actual expenses incurred by Members in travelling to and from the places of work and in connection with other duty travel.
3. Others expenses incurred by Members in the exercise of their mandate may be reimbursed by means of a flat-rate sum.
4. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.
5. Article 9(3) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*

Article 21

1. Members shall be entitled to assistance from personal staff whom they may freely choose.
2. Parliament shall meet the expenses actually incurred by Members in employing such personal staff.
3. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 22

1. Members shall be entitled to use Parliament's office facilities, telecommunications equipment and official vehicles.
2. Parliament shall lay down the conditions for the exercise of this right.

Article 23

1. All payments shall be made from the budget of the European Union.
2. The payments due pursuant to Articles 10, 13, 14, 15 and 17 shall be made monthly in euro or, at the option of the Member, in the currency of the Member State where he/she is domiciled. Parliament shall lay down the conditions under which the payments are to be made.

Article 24

Decisions concerning the implementation of this Statute shall come into force once they have been published in the Official Journal of the European Union

TITLE II TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS

Article 25

1. Members who belonged to Parliament prior to the entry into force of this Statute and were re-elected may opt for the national system applicable hitherto in respect of the salary, transitional allowance and pensions for the entire duration of their membership of the European Parliament.
2. These payments shall be made from the budget of the Member State in question.

Article 26

1. Members who wish to continue with the national system applicable hitherto pursuant to Article 25(1) shall notify the President of Parliament of this decision in writing within 30 days of the entry into force of this Statute.

2. The decision shall be final and irrevocable.
3. Should such notification not be made within the time-limit, the provisions of this Statute shall apply.

Article 27

1. The voluntary pension fund set up by Parliament shall be maintained after the entry into force of this Statute for Members or former Members who have already acquired rights or future entitlements in that fund.
2. Acquired rights and future entitlements shall be maintained in full. Parliament may lay down criteria and conditions governing the acquisition of new rights or entitlements.
3. Members who receive the salary pursuant to Article 10 may not acquire any new rights or future entitlements in the voluntary pension fund.
4. The fund shall not be open to Members who are first elected to Parliament after this Statute becomes applicable.
5. Articles 9(3) and 14(3) shall apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Article 28

1. Any pension entitlement that a Member has acquired in accordance with national arrangements at the time when this Statute is applied shall be retained in full.
2. If the length of the term of office served in the European Parliament or in a national parliament is not sufficient under national arrangements to give rise to any pension entitlement, the period concerned shall be taken into account in calculating the pension based on this Statute. Parliament may conclude agreements with the competent authorities of the Member States on the transfer of acquired entitlements.

Article 29

1. Each Member State may adopt, for the Members elected in it, rules different from the provisions of this Statute as regards the salary, transitional allowance and pensions for a transitional period which may not exceed the length of two European Parliament parliamentary terms.
2. Those rules shall place the Members on at least an equal footing with the members of their respective national parliament.
3. All payments shall be made from the budget of the Member State in question.
4. The entitlements of Members pursuant to Articles 18 to 22 shall not be affected by such rules.

TITLE III FINAL PROVISION

Article 30

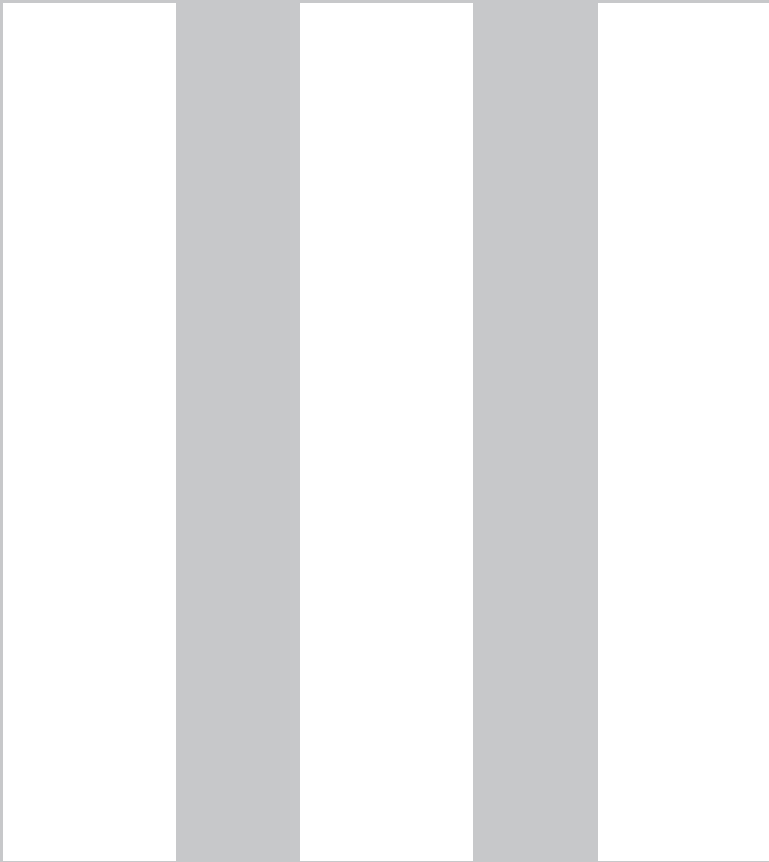
This Statute shall enter into force on the first day of the European Parliament parliamentary term beginning in 2009.

Done at Strasbourg, 28 September 2005.

For the European Parliament

The President
J. Borrell Fontelles

ANNEX



ANNEX III – Code of Conduct for Members of the European Parliament with respect to financial interests and conflicts of interest

Article 1

Guiding principles

In exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament:

- (a) are guided by and observe the following general principles of conduct: disinterest, integrity, openness, diligence, honesty, accountability and respect for Parliament's reputation,
- (b) act solely in the public interest and refrain from obtaining or seeking to obtain any direct or indirect financial benefit or other reward.

Article 2

Main duties of Members

In exercising their duties, Members of the European Parliament shall:

- (a) not enter into any agreement to act or vote in the interest of any other legal or natural person that would compromise their voting freedom, as enshrined in Article 6 of the Act of 20 September 1976 concerning the election of the members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage and Article 2 of the Statute for Members of the European Parliament,
- (b) not solicit, accept or receive any direct or indirect financial benefit or other reward in exchange for influencing, or voting on, legislation, motions for a resolution, written declarations or questions tabled in Parliament or any of its committees, and shall consciously seek to avoid any situation which might imply bribery or corruption.

Article 3

Conflicts of interest

1. A conflict of interest exists where a Member of the European Parliament has a personal interest that could improperly influence the performance of his or her duties as a Member. A conflict of interest does not exist where a Member benefits only as a member of the general public or of a broad class of persons.
2. Any Member who finds that he or she has a conflict of interest shall immediately take the necessary steps to address it, in accordance with the principles and provisions of this Code of Conduct. If the Member is unable to resolve the conflict of interest, he or she shall report this to the President in writing. In cases of ambiguity, the Member may seek advice in confidence from the Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members, established under Article 7.
3. Without prejudice to paragraph 2, Members shall disclose, before speaking or voting in plenary or in one of Parliament's bodies, or if proposed as a rapporteur, any actual or potential conflict of interest in relation to the matter under consideration, where such conflict is not evident from the information declared pursuant to Article 4. Such disclosure shall be made in writing or orally to the chair during the parliamentary proceedings in question.

Article 4

Declaration by Members

1. For reasons of transparency, Members of the European Parliament shall be personally responsible for submitting a declaration of financial interests to the President by the end of the first part-session after elections to the European Parliament (or within 30 days of taking up office with the Parliament in the course of a parliamentary term), in accordance with a form to be adopted by the Bureau pursuant to Article 9. They shall notify the President of any changes that have an influence on their declaration within 30 days of each change occurring.
2. The declaration of financial interests shall contain the following information, which shall be provided in a precise manner:
 - (a) the Member's occupation(s) during the three-year period before he or she took up office with the Parliament, and his or her membership during that period of any boards or committees of companies, non-governmental organisations, associations or other bodies established in law,
 - (b) any salary which the Member receives for the exercise of a mandate in another parliament,
 - (c) any regular remunerated activity which the Member undertakes alongside the exercise of his or her office, whether as an employee or as a self-employed person,
 - (d) membership of any boards or committees of any companies, non-governmental organisations, associations or other bodies established in law, or any other relevant outside activity that the Member undertakes, whether the membership or activity in question is remunerated or unremunerated,
 - (e) any occasional remunerated outside activity (including writing, lecturing or the provision of expert advice), if the total remuneration exceeds EUR 5 000 in a calendar year,
 - (f) any holding in any company or partnership, where there are potential public policy implications or where that holding gives the Member significant influence over the affairs of the body in question,
 - (g) any support, whether financial or in terms of staff or material, additional to that provided by Parliament and granted to the Member in connection with his or her political activities by third parties, whose identity shall be disclosed,
 - (h) any other financial interests which might influence the performance of the Member's duties.

Any regular income Members receive in respect of each item declared in accordance with the first subparagraph shall be placed in one of the following categories:

- EUR 500 to EUR 1 000 a month;
- EUR 1 001 to EUR 5 000 a month;
- EUR 5 001 to EUR 10 000 a month;
- more than EUR 10 000 a month.

Any other income Members receive in respect of each item declared in accordance with the first subparagraph shall be calculated on an annual basis, divided by twelve and placed in one of the categories set out in the second subparagraph.

3. The information provided to the President in line with this Article shall be published on Parliament's website in an easily accessible manner.
4. Members may not be elected as office-holders of Parliament or of one of its bodies, be appointed as a rapporteur or participate in an official delegation, if they have not submitted their declaration of financial interests.

Article 5

Gifts or similar benefits

1. Members of the European Parliament shall refrain from accepting, in the performance of their duties, any gifts or similar benefits, other than those with an approximate value of less than EUR 150 given in accordance with courtesy usage or those given to them in accordance with courtesy usage when they are representing Parliament in an official capacity.
2. Any gifts presented to Members, in accordance with paragraph 1, when they are representing Parliament in an official capacity shall be handed over to the President and dealt with in accordance with implementing measures to be laid down by the Bureau pursuant to Article 9.
3. The provisions of paragraphs 1 and 2 shall not apply to the reimbursement of travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses of Members, or to the direct payment of such expenses by third parties, when Members attend, pursuant to an invitation and in the performance of their duties, at any events organised by third parties.

The scope of this paragraph, in particular the rules designed to ensure transparency, shall be specified in the implementing measures to be laid down by the Bureau pursuant to Article 9.

Article 6

Activities of former Members

Former Members of the European Parliament who engage in professional lobbying or representational activities directly linked to the European Union decision-making process may not, throughout the period in which they engage in those activities, benefit from the facilities granted to former Members under the rules laid down by the Bureau to that effect.¹

Article 7

Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members

1. An Advisory Committee on the Conduct of Members ('the Advisory Committee') is hereby established.
2. The Advisory Committee shall be composed of five members, appointed by the President at the beginning of his or her term of office from amongst the members of the bureaux and the coordinators of the Committee on Constitutional Affairs and the Committee on Legal Affairs, taking due account of the Members' experience and of political balance.
Each member of the Advisory Committee shall serve as chair for six months on a rotating basis.
3. The President shall also, at the beginning of his or her term of office, nominate reserve members for the Advisory Committee, one for each political group not represented in the Advisory Committee.
In the event of an alleged breach of this Code of Conduct by a member of a political group not represented in the Advisory Committee, the relevant reserve member shall serve as a sixth full member of the Advisory Committee for the purposes of investigation of that alleged breach.
4. Upon request by a Member, the Advisory Committee shall give him or her, in confidence and within 30 calendar days, guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the provisions of this Code of Conduct. The Member in question shall be entitled to rely on such guidance.
At the request of the President, the Advisory Committee shall also assess alleged breaches of this Code of Conduct and advise the President on possible action to be taken.
5. The Advisory Committee may, after consulting the President, seek advice from outside experts.
6. The Advisory Committee shall publish an annual report of its work.

¹ Bureau Decision of 12 April 1999.

Article 8

Procedure in the event of possible breaches of the Code of Conduct

1. Where there is reason to think that a Member of the European Parliament may have breached this Code of Conduct, the President may refer the matter to the Advisory Committee.
2. The Advisory Committee shall examine the circumstances of the alleged breach, and may hear the Member concerned. On the basis of the conclusions of its findings, it shall make a recommendation to the President on a possible decision.
3. If, taking into account that recommendation, the President concludes that the Member concerned has breached the Code of Conduct, he shall, after hearing the Member, adopt a reasoned decision laying down a penalty, which he shall notify to the Member.
The penalty may consist of one or more of the measures listed in Rule 153(3) of the Rules of Procedure.²
4. The internal appeal procedures defined in Rule 154 of the Rules of Procedure shall be open to the Member concerned.
5. After the expiry of the time-limits laid down in Rule 154 of the Rules of the Procedure, any penalty imposed on a Member shall be announced by the President in plenary and prominently published on Parliament's website for the remainder of the parliamentary term.

Article 9

Implementation

The Bureau shall lay down implementing measures for this Code of Conduct, including a monitoring procedure, and shall update the amounts referred to in Articles 4 and 5, when necessary.

It may bring forward proposals for revision of this Code of Conduct.

² (a) a reprimand;
(b) forfeiture of entitlement to the daily subsistence allowance for a period of between two and ten days;
(c) without prejudice to the right to vote in plenary, and subject, in this instance, to strict compliance with the Members' standards of conduct, temporary suspension from participation in all or some of the activities of Parliament for a period of between two and ten consecutive days on which Parliament or any of its bodies, committees or delegations meet;
(d) submission to the Conference of Presidents, in accordance with Rule 19, of a proposal for the Member's suspension or removal from one or more of the elected offices held by the Member in Parliament.

ANNEX

IV

ANNEX IV – TROMBINOSCOPE


Bureau and Quaestors

The Bureau consists of the President of the European Parliament, the 14 Vice-Presidents and the five Quaestors elected by Parliament for a period of two and a half years (which can be renewed). In the event of a tied vote in the Bureau, the President has the deciding vote. The Quaestors are members of the Bureau in an advisory capacity.

The secretariat for the Bureau and the Quaestors is responsible for the preparation and follow-up of meetings of the two governing bodies by preparing draft decisions, notes for the chair, technical notes and minutes. Support is also provided to all working parties of these governing bodies.

The secretariat is also responsible for the day-to-day management of matters falling within the remit of the two bodies as well as for their correspondence. It also keeps and updates the various rules (see Compendium of Rules).

Certain support services are shared between the secretariat of the Bureau/Quaestors and the secretariat of the Conference of Presidents (such as updating of the Compendium of Rules, intranet site).

President of the Bureau		
Martin Schulz		Germany - S&D
Email	martin.schulz@europarl.europa.eu	
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Vice-Presidents

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Name	E-mail and responsibilities
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<p>Edward McMillan-Scott United Kingdom - ALDE</p> 	<p>edward.mcmillan-scott@europarl.europa.eu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights and Democracy • Sakharov Network • Question Time • WG on ICT Innovation Strategy, member • Transatlantic Relations

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<p>Oldřich Vlasák Czech Republic - ECR</p> 	<p>oldrich.vlasak@europarl.europa.eu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local and Regional Authorities and Committee of the Regions • STOA • ACP • Eastern Neighbourhood Policy, secondary responsibility (with VP Protasiewicz) WG on Information and Communication Policy, member • WG on Buildings, Transport and Green Parliament, member • WG on Gender Equality and Diversity, member

Quaestors

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Conference of the Presidents


The Conference of Presidents is the political body in Parliament responsible for:

- the organisation of Parliament’s business and legislative planning;
- deciding the responsibilities and membership of committees and delegations;
- relations with other EU institutions, the national parliaments and non-EU countries.

The Conference of Presidents consists of the President of Parliament and the political group chairs. One representative of the non-attached Members also has a seat in the Conference of Presidents but no voting rights. The Conference of Presidents takes its decisions by consensus or by weighted vote based on the number of Members in each political group. The Conference of Presidents prepares Parliament’s timetable and plenary sitting agendas and allocates seats in the Chamber.

The secretariat of the Conference of Presidents is responsible for the preparation and follow-up of meetings of this governing body by preparing draft decisions, notes for the chair, technical notes and minutes. Support is also provided to all working parties of this governing body.





The secretariat is also responsible for the day-to-day management of matters falling within the remit of this body as well as for their correspondence. It keeps and updates the various rules (see Compendium of Rules). Certain support services are shared between the secretariat of the Bureau/Quaestors and the secretariat of the Conference of Presidents (such as updating of the Compendium of Rules, intranet site).

President		
<p>Martin Schulz</p>		<p>Germany - S&D</p>

Email

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Political Group Chairs

Name	E-mail
<p>Joseph Daul EPP</p> 	<p>joseph.daul@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Hannes Swoboda S&D</p> 	<p>hannes.swoboda@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Guy Verhofstadt ALDE</p> 	<p>guy.verhofstadt@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Rebecca Harms Greens/EFA</p> 	<p>rebecca.harms@europarl.europa.eu</p>

Name	E-mail
<p>Daniel Cohn-Bendit Greens/EFA</p> 	<p>daniel.cohn-bendit@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Martin Callanan ECR</p> 	<p>martin.callanan@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Gabriele Zimmer GUE/NGL</p> 	<p>gabriele.zimmer@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Francesco Enrico EFD Speroni</p> 	<p>francescoenrico.speroni@europarl.europa.eu</p>
<p>Nigel Farage EFD</p> 	<p>nigel.farage@europarl.europa.eu</p>

Parliamentary Committees

Committee on Foreign Affairs - AFET

Chair	Elmar Brok	
		
		Germany - EPP

Email elmar.brok@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Fiorello Provera	Italy - EFD
	Ioan Mircea Paşcu	Romania - S&D
	Andrey Kovatchev	Bulgaria - EPP
	Willy Meyer	Spain - GUE/NGL

Coordinators of the political groups in AFET

European People's Party	José Ignacio Salafranca (Spain)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Ana Gomes (Portugal)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Annemie Neyts-Uyttebroeck (Belgium)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Ulrike Lunacek (Austria)
	Franziska Brantner (Germany)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Charles Tannock (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Willy Meyer (Spain)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Bastiaan Belder (Netherlands)


Secretariat contact afet-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

AFET responsibilities

- the common foreign and security policy and - with the assistance of its sub-committee on security and defence - the common security and defence policy;
- relations with the UNO and other international organisations;
- political relations with third countries and cooperation and assistance programmes or international agreements such as association and partnership agreements;
- opening, monitoring and concluding of negotiations concerning the accession of European States to the Union;
- with the assistance of its sub-committee on human rights: human rights, the protection of minorities and the promotion of democratic values in third countries;
- coordination of the work of joint parliamentary committees and parliamentary cooperation committees as well as that of the interparliamentary delegations and ad hoc delegations and election observation.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlAFET>

Subcommittee on Human Rights - DROI

Chair	Barbara Lochbihler	
		
		Germany - Greens/EFA

Email barbara.lochbihler@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Andrzej Grzyb	Poland - EPP
	Jean Roatta	France - EPP
	Metin Kazak	Bulgaria - ALDE
	Joanna Senyszyn	Poland - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in DROI

European People's Party	László Tókécs (Romania)
	Inese Vaidere (Latvia)
	Eduard Kukan (Slovakia)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Richard Howitt (UK)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Leonidas Donskis (Lithuania)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Rui Tavares (Portugal)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Charles Tannock (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Marie-Christine Vergiat (France)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Frank Vanhecke (Belgium)

Secretariat contact droi-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


DROI responsibilities

The Subcommittee's main responsibilities are set out in Section I(5) of Annex VII of the Rules of Procedure of the European Parliament:

- issues concerning human rights, the protection of minorities and the promotion of democratic values in third countries: In this context the committee [on foreign affairs] is assisted by a subcommittee on human rights. Without prejudice to the relevant rules, members from other committees and bodies with responsibilities in this field shall be invited to attend the meetings of the subcommittee.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlDROI>

Subcommittee on Security and Defence - SEDE

Chair	Arnaud Danjean	
		
		France - EPP

Email arnaud.danjean@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Sophocles Sophocleous	Cyprus - S&D
	Norica Nicolai	Romania - ALDE
	Justas Vincas Paleckis	Lithuania - S&D
	Krzysztof Lisek	Poland - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in SEDE

European People's Party	Michael Gahler (Germany)
	Tunne Kelam (Estonia)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Maria Eleni Koppa (Greece)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Johannes Cornelis van Baalen (Netherlands)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Tarja Cronberg (Finland)
	Indrek Tarand (Estonia)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Geoffrey van Orden (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Sabine Lösing (Germany)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Sampo Terho (Finland)

Secretariat contact sede-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

SEDE responsibilities

The Subcommittee on Security and Defence is a subcommittee of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Its responsibilities are described in the first paragraph of the Committee's mandate:

- "Committee responsible for: 1. the common foreign and security policy (CFSP) and the European security and defence policy (ESDP). In this context the committee is assisted by a subcommittee on security and defence;"

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlSEDE>

Committee on Development - DEVE

Chair	Eva Joly	
		
		France - Greens/EFA

Email eva.joly@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Michèle Striffler	France - EPP
	Nirj Deva	UK - ECR
	Iva Zanicchi	Italy - EPP
	Corina Cretu	Romania - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in DEVE

European People's Party	Gay Mitchell (Ireland)
	Filip Kaczmarek (Poland)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Ricardo Cortés Lastra (Spain)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Charles Goerens (Luxembourg)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Catherine Grèze (France)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Nirj Deva (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Mikael Gustafsson (Sweden)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Franck Vanhecke (Belgium)

Secretariat contact deve-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

DEVE responsibilities

The Committee on Development is the Parliament's main actor in preparing legislation on development policy and humanitarian aid and monitoring its implementation. In addition it also works on:

- Overseeing EU initiatives for donor coordination, among EU Member States and other donors, and monitoring levels of development funding among Member States;
- Verifying conformity with international commitments agreed by the EU and others on such areas as aid effectiveness, financing for development, Millennium Development Goals etc.;
- Monitoring respect for Policy Coherence for Development at European level;
- Raising awareness about EU development policy among decision-makers and the general public.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlDEVE>

Committee on International Trade - INTA

Chair	Vital Moreira	
		
		Portugal - S&D

Email vital.moreira@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Christiana Muscardini	Italy - EPP
	Robert Sturdy	UK - ECR
	Pawel Zalewski	Poland - EPP
	Yannick Jadot	France - Greens/EFA

Coordinators of the political groups in INTA

European People's Party	Daniel Caspary (Germany)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Bernd Lange (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Metin Kazak (Bulgaria)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Yannick Jadot (France)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Robert Sturdy (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Helmut Scholz (Germany)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	William Earl of Dartmouth (UK)

Secretariat contact inta-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

INTA responsibilities

Committee responsible for: matters relating to the establishment and implementation of the Union's common commercial policy and its external economic relations, in particular:

1. financial, economic and trade relations with third countries and regional organisations;
2. measures of technical harmonisation or standardisation in fields covered by instruments of international law;
3. relations with the relevant international organisations and with organisations promoting regional economic and commercial integration outside the Union;
4. relations with the WTO, including its parliamentary dimension.

The committee liaises with the relevant inter-parliamentary and ad hoc delegations for the economic and trade aspects of relations with third countries.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlINTA>

Committee on Budgets - BUDG

Chair	Alain Lamassoure	
		
		France - EPP

Email alain.lamassoure@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Jutta Haug	Germany - S&D
	George Lyon	United Kingdom - ALDE
	Jean-Luc Dehaene	Belgium - EPP
	Ivailo Kalfin	Bulgaria - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in BUDG

European People's Party	Salvador Garriga Polledo (Spain)
	Sidonia Jedrzejewska (Poland)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Göran Färm (Sweden)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Jan Mulder (Netherlands)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Helga Trüpel (Germany)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Richard James Ashworth (UK)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Marta Andreasen (Spain)

Secretariat contact ip-BUDG@europarl.europa.eu

BUDG responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the multiannual financial framework of the Union's revenue and expenditure and the Union's system of own resources; the budget of the decentralised bodies;
- Parliament's budgetary prerogatives, namely the budget of the Union as well as the negotiation and implementation of interinstitutional agreements in this field;
- Parliament's estimates according to the procedure defined in the Rules of Procedure;
- the financial activities of the European Investment Bank;
- the budgetisation of the European Development Fund, without prejudice to the powers of the committee responsible for the ACP-EU Partnership Agreement;
- financial implications and compatibility with the multiannual Financial Framework of all Community acts, without prejudice to the powers of the relevant committees;

BUDG responsibilities

- keeping track of and assessing the implementation of the current budget notwithstanding Point 78(1) Rules of Procedure, transfers of appropriations, procedures relating to the establishment plans, administrative appropriations and opinions concerning buildings-related projects with significant financial implications;
- the Financial Regulation, excluding matters relating to the implementation, management and control of the budget.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlBUDG>

Committee on Budgetary Control - CONT

Chair	Michael Theurer 	Germany - ALDE
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Email michael.theurer@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Bart Staes	Belgium - Greens/EFA
	Illiana Ivanova	Bulgaria - EPP
	Boguslaw Liberadzki	Poland - S&D
	Boguslaw Sonik	Poland - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in CONT

European People's Party	Ingeborg Gräßle (Germany)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Jens Geier (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Michael Theurer (Germany)
	Theodoros Skylakakis (Greece)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Bart Staes (Belgium)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Ryszard Czarnecki (Poland)
	Andrea Ceskova (Czech Republic)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Søren Bo Søndergaard (Denmark)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Marta Andreasen (UK)

Secretariat contact cont-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


CONT responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the control of the implementation of the budget of the Union and of the European Development Fund, and the decisions on discharge to be taken by Parliament, including the internal discharge procedure and all other measures accompanying or implementing such decisions;
- the closure, presenting and auditing of the accounts and balance sheets of the Union, its institutions and any bodies financed by it, including the establishment of appropriations to be carried over and the settling of balances;
- the control of the financial activities of the European Investment Bank;
- monitoring the cost-effectiveness of the various forms of Community financing in the implementation of the Union's policies;
- consideration of fraud and irregularities in the implementation of the budget of the Union, measures aiming at preventing and prosecuting such cases, and the protection of the Union's financial interests in general;
- relations with the Court of Auditors, the appointment of its members and consideration of its reports;
- the Financial Regulation as far as the implementation, management and control of the budget are concerned.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/euoparlCONT>

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs - ECON

Chair	Sharon Bowles 	
		UK - ALDE

Email sharon.bowles@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Pablo Zalba Bidegain	Spain - EPP
	Arlene McCarthy	UK - S&D
	Theodor Dumitru Stolojan	Romania - EPP
	Edward Scicluna	Malta - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in ECON

European People's Party	Jean-Paul Gauzès (France)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Elisa Ferreira (Portugal)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Sylvie Goulard (France)

Greens/ European Free Alliance	Sven Giegold (Germany)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Kay Swinburne (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Jürgen Klute (Germany)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Godfrey Bloom (UK)

Secretariat contact econ-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


ECON responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the economic and monetary policies of the Union, the functioning of Economic and Monetary Union and the European monetary and financial system (including relations with the relevant institutions or organisations);
- the free movement of capital and payments (cross-border payments, single payment area, balance of payments, capital movements and borrowing and lending policy, control of movements of capital originating in third countries, measures to encourage the export of the Union's capital);
- the international monetary and financial system (including relations with financial and monetary institutions and organisations);
- rules on competition and State or public aid;
- tax provisions;
- the regulation and supervision of financial services, institutions and markets including financial reporting, auditing, accounting rules, corporate governance and other company law matters specifically concerning financial services.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/ECON/home.html>

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs - EMPL

Chair	Pervenche Berès	
		
		France - S&D

Email pervenche.beres@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Nadja Hirsch	Germany - ALDE
	Inês Cristina Zuber	Portugal - GUE/NGL
	Elisabeth Schroedter	Germany - Greens/EFA
	Thomas Mann	Germany - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in EMPL

European People's Party	Csaba Óry (Hungary)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Alejandro Cercas (Spain)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Nadja Hirsch (Germany)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Jean Lambert (UK)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Milan Cabrnoch (Czech Republic)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Thomas Händel (Germany)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Mara Bizzotto (Italy)

Secretariat contact empl-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

EMPL responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- employment policy and all aspects of social policy such as working conditions, social security and social protection;
- health and safety measures at the workplace
- the European Social Fund
- vocational training policy, including professional qualifications
- the free movement of workers and pensioners
- all forms of discrimination at the workplace and in the labour market except those based on sex
- relations with:
 - the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop);
 - the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions;
 - the European Training Foundation;
 - the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work;
 - other relevant EU bodies and international organisations,

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarEMPL>

Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety - ENVI

Chair	Matthias Groote	
		
		Germany - S&D

Email matthias.groote@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy	Netherlands - ALDE
	Carl Schlyter	Sweden - Greens/EFA
	Dan Jørgensen	Denmark - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in ENVI

European People's Party	Peter Liese (Germany)
	Richard Seeber (Austria)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Linda McAvan (UK)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Chris Davies (UK)
Greens/European Free Alliance	Satu Hassi (Finland)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Anna Rosbach (Denmark)
European United Left/Nordic Green Left	Kartika Tamara Liotard (Netherlands)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Oreste Rossi (Italy)

Secretariat contact envi-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

ENVI responsibilities


Committee responsible for:

- environmental policy and environmental protection measures, in particular:
 - (a) air, soil and water pollution, waste management and recycling, dangerous substances and preparations, noise levels, climate change, protection of biodiversity, (b) sustainable development, (c) international and regional measures and agreements aimed at protecting the environment, (d) restoration of environmental damage, (e) civil protection, (f) the European Environment Agency;
- public health, in particular:
 - (a) programmes and specific actions in the field of public health, (b) pharmaceutical and cosmetic products, (c) health aspects of bioterrorism, (d) the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products and the European Centre of Disease Prevention and Control;

- public health, in particular:
 - (a) programmes and specific actions in the field of public health, (b) pharmaceutical and cosmetic products, (c) health aspects of bioterrorism, (d) the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products and the European Centre of Disease Prevention and Control;
- food safety issues, in particular:
 - (a) the labelling and safety of foodstuffs, (b) veterinary legislation concerning protection against risks to human health; public health checks on foodstuffs and food production systems, (c) the European Food Safety Authority and the European Food and Veterinary Office.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/euoparlENVI>

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy - ITRE

Chair	Amalia Sartori	
		
		Italy - EPP

Email amalia.sartori@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Patrizia Toia	Italy - S&D
	Jens Rohde	Denmark - ALDE
	Dimitrios Droutsas	Greece - S&D
	Evžen Tošenovsky	Czech Republic - ECR

Coordinators of the political groups in ITRE

European People's Party	Pilar del Castillo Vera (Spain)
	Romana Jordan (Slovenia)
	Paul Rübig (Austria)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Teresa Riera Madurell (Spain)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Jens Rohde (Denmark)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Claude Turmes (Luxembourg)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Giles Chichester (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Marisa Matias (Portugal)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Niki Tzavela (Greece)

Secretariat contact itre-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

ITRE responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the Union's industrial policy and the application of new technologies, including measures relating to SMEs;
- the Union's research policy, including the dissemination and exploitation of research findings;
- space policy;
- the activities of the Joint Research Centre and the Central Office for Nuclear Measurements, as well as JET, ITER and other projects in the same area;
- Community measures relating to energy policy in general, the security of energy supply and energy efficiency including the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the energy infrastructure sector;
- the Euratom Treaty and Euratom Supply Agency; nuclear safety, decommissioning and waste disposal in the nuclear sector;
- the information society and information technology, including the establishment and development of trans-European networks in telecommunication infrastructure.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlITRE>

Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection - IMCO

Chair	Malcolm Harbour	
		
		UK - ECR

Email malcolm.harbour@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Sirpa Pietikäinen	Finland - EPP
	Bernadette Vergnaud	France - S&D
	Gino Trematerra	Italy - EPP
	Louis Grech	Malta - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in IMCO

European People's Party	Andreas Schwab (Germany)
	Malgorzata Handzlik (Poland)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Evelyne Gebhardt (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Toine Manders (Netherlands)
	Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (Germany)

Greens/ European Free Alliance	Heide Rühle (Germany)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Adam Bielan (Poland)
	Edvard Kozusnik (Czech Republic)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Cornelius de Jong (Netherlands)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Matteo Salvini (Italy)

Secretariat contact imco-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

IMCO responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- coordination at Union level of national legislation in the sphere of the internal market and for the customs union, in particular:
 - (a) the free movement of goods including the harmonisation of technical standards;
 - (b) the right of establishment;
 - (c) the freedom to provide services except in the financial and postal sectors;
- measures aiming at the identification and removal of potential obstacles to the functioning of the internal market;
- the promotion and protection of the economic interests of consumers, except for public health and food safety issues, in the context of the establishment of the internal market.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/IMCO/home.html>

Committee on Transport and Tourism - TRAN

Chair	Brian Simpson	
		
		UK - S&D

Email brian.simpson@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Dominique Riquet	France - EPP
	Peter van Dalen	Netherlands - ECR
	Silvia-Adriana Ticău	Romania - S&D
	Dieter-Lebrecht Koch	Germany - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in TRAN	
European People's Party	Mathieu Grosch (Belgium)
	Werner Kuhn (Germany)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Saïd El Khadraoui (Belgium)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Gesine Meissner (Germany)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Michael Cramer (Germany)
	Eva Lichtenberger (Austria)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Roberts Zile (Latvia)
	Jacqueline Foster (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Jaromír Kohlíček (Czech Republic)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Juozas Imbrasas (Lithuania)

Secretariat contact tran-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


TRAN responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- matters relating to the development of a common policy for rail, road, inland waterway, maritime and air transport, in particular:
 - (a) common rules applicable to transport within the European Union;
 - (b) the establishment and development of trans-European networks in the area of transport infrastructure;
 - (c) the provision of transport services and relations in the field of transport with third countries,
 - (d) transport safety;
 - (e) relations with international transport bodies and organisations;
- postal services;
- tourism.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlTRAN>

Committee on Regional Development - REGI

Chair	Danuta Hübner	
		
		Poland - EPP

Email danuta.huebner@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Georgios Stavrakakis	Greece - S&D
	Markus Pieper	Germany - EPP
	Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmemova	Bulgaria - ALDE
	Nikos Chrysogelos	Greece - Greens/EFA

Coordinators of the political groups in REGI

European People's Party	Lambert van Nistelrooij (Netherlands)
	Iosif Matula (Romania)
	Joachim Zeller (Germany)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Constanze Angela Krehl (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Ramona Nicole Mănescu (Romania)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Alfonsi, François (France)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Oldřich, Vlasák (Czech Republic)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Younous Omarjee (France)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	John Bufton (UK)

Secretariat contact REGI-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

REGI responsibilities

Committee responsible for regional and cohesion policy, in particular:

- the European Regional Development Fund, the Cohesion Fund and the other instruments of the Union's regional policy;
- assessing the impact of other Union policies on economic and social cohesion;
- coordination of the Union's structural instruments;
- outermost regions and islands as well as trans-frontier and interregional cooperation;
- relations with the Committee of the Regions, interregional cooperation organisations and local and regional authorities.

At the meeting of 14 December 2006, the Conference of Presidents decided to include the urban dimension as a competence of the committee.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlREGI>

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development - AGRI

Chair	Paolo De Castro	
		
		Italy - S&D

Email paolo.decastro@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Czesław Adam Siekierski	Poland - EPP
	José Bové	France - Greens/EFA
	Janusz Wojciechowski	Poland - ECR
	Marit Paulsen	Sweden - ALDE

Coordinators of the political groups in AGRI

European People's Party	Albert Dess (Germany)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos (Portugal)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	George Lyon (UK)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Martin Häusling (Germany)
European Conservatives and Reformists	James Nicholson (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Alfreds Rubiks (Latvia)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	John Stuart Agnew (UK)

Secretariat contact agri-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

AGRI responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the operation and development of the common agricultural policy;
- rural development, including the activities of the relevant financial instruments;
- legislation on:
 - (a) veterinary and plant-health matters, animal feeding stuffs provided such measures are not intended to protect against risks to human health;
 - (b) animal husbandry and welfare;
- the improvement of the quality of agricultural products;
- supplies of agricultural raw materials;
- the Community Plant Variety Office;
- forestry.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarLAGRI>

Committee on Fisheries - PECH

Chair	Gabriel Mato Adrover	
		
		Spain - EPP

Email gabriel.mato@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Struan Stevenson	UK - ECR
	Alain Cadec	France - EPP
	Guido Milana	Italy - S&D
	Nils Torvalds	Finland - ALDE

Coordinators of the political groups in PECH

European People's Party	Antonello Antinoro (Italy)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Ulrike Rodust (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Pat the Cope Gallagher (Ireland)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Isabella Lövin (Sweden)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Marek Józef Gróbarczyk (Poland)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	João Ferreira (Portugal)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Nigel Farage (UK)

Secretariat contact pech-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


PECH responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the operation and development of the common fisheries policy and its management;
- the conservation of fishery resources;
- the common organisation of the market in fishery products;
- structural policy in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including the financial instruments for fisheries guidance;
- international fisheries agreements.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlPECH>

Committee on Culture and Education - CULT

Chair	Doris Pack	
		
		Germany - EPP

Email doris.pack@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Helga Trüpel	Germany - Greens/EFA
	Lorenzo FONTANA	Italy - EFD
	Lothar Bisky	Germany - GUE/NGL
	Morten Løkkegaard	Denmark - ALDE

Coordinators of the political groups in CULT

European People's Party	Marco Scurria (Italy)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Petra Kammerevert (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Hannu Takkula (Finland)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Malika Benarab-Attou (France)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Marekhenryk Migalski (Poland)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Marie-Christine Vergiat (France)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Lorenzo Fontana (Italy)

Secretariat contact cult-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

CULT responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the cultural aspects of the European Union, and in particular:
 - (a) improving the knowledge and dissemination of culture;
 - (b) the protection and promotion of cultural and linguistic diversity;
 - (c) the conservation and safeguarding of cultural heritage, cultural exchanges and artistic creation;
- the Union's education policy, including the European higher education area, the promotion of the system of European schools and lifelong learning;
- audiovisual policy and the cultural and educational aspects of the information society;
- youth policy and the development of a sports and leisure policy;
- information and media policy;
- cooperation with third countries in the areas of culture and education and relations with the relevant international organisations and institutions.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlCULT>

Committee on Legal Affairs - JURI

Chair	Klaus-Heiner Lehne	
		
		Germany - EPP

Email klaus-heiner.lehne@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Evelyn Regner	Austria - S&D
	Raffaele Baldassarre	Italy - EPP
	Françoise Castex	France - S&D
	Sebastian Valentin Bodu	Romania - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in JURI

European People's Party	Tadeusz Zwiefka (Poland)
	Marielle Gallo (France)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Bernhard Rapkay (Germany)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Cecilia Wikström (Sweden)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Eva Lichtenberger (Austria)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Sajjad Karim (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Jiří Maštálka (Czech Republic)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Francesco Enrico Speroni (Italy)

Secretariat contact juri-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

JURI responsibilities


1. the interpretation and application of Union law and compliance of Union acts with primary law, notably the choice of legal bases and respect for the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality;
2. the interpretation and application of international law, in so far as the European Union is affected;
3. the simplification of Union law, in particular legislative proposals for its official codification;
4. the legal protection of Parliament's rights and prerogatives, including its involvement in actions before the Court of Justice of the European Union;
5. Union acts which affect the Member States' legal order, namely in the fields of:
 - (a) civil and commercial law;
 - (b) company law;
 - (c) intellectual property law;
 - (d) procedural law;

JURI responsibilities

6. measures concerning judicial and administrative cooperation in civil matters;
7. environmental liability and sanctions against environmental crime;
8. ethical questions related to new technologies, applying the procedure with associated committees with the relevant committees;
9. the Statute for Members and the Staff Regulations of the European Union;
10. privileges and immunities as well as verification of Members' credentials;
11. the organisation and statute of the Court of Justice of the European Union;
12. the Office for Harmonisation in the Internal Market.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlJURI>

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs - LIBE

Chair	<p>Juan Fernando López Aguilar</p> 	
		Spain - S&D

Email juanfernando.lopezaguilar@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Kinga Gál	Hungary - EPP
	Sophia in 't Veld	Netherlands - ALDE
	Salvatore Iacolino	Italy - EPP
	Kinga Göncz	Hungary - S&D

Coordinators of the political groups in LIBE

European People's Party	Simon Busuttill (Malta)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Claude Moraes (UK)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Renate Weber (Romania)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Judith Sargentini (Netherlands)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Timothy Kirkhope (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Kyriacos Triantaphyllides (Cyprus)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Mario Borghezio (Italy)

Secretariat contact libe-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


LIBE responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the protection within the territory of the Union of citizens' rights, human rights and fundamental rights, including the protection of minorities, as laid down in the Treaties and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;
- the measures needed to combat all forms of discrimination other than those based on sex or those occurring at the workplace and in the labour market;
- legislation in the areas of transparency and of the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data;
- the establishment and development of an area of freedom, security and justice, in particular:
 - (a) measures concerning the entry and movement of persons, asylum and migration;
 - (b) measures concerning an integrated management of the common borders;
 - (c) measures relating to police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters;
- the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Europol, Eurojust, Cefpol and other bodies and agencies in the same area;
- the determination of a clear risk of a serious breach by a Member State of the principles common to the Member States.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlLIBE>

Committee on Constitutional Affairs - AFCO

Chair	Carlo Casini 	
		Italy - EPP

Email carlo.casini@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Zita Gurmai	Hungary - S&D
	Constance Le Grip	France - EPP
	Morten Messerschmidt	Denmark - EFD
	Ashley Fox	UK - ECR

Coordinators of the political groups in AFCO

European People's Party	Rafal Trzaskowski (Poland)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Roberto Gualtieri (Italy)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Andrew Duff (UK)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Gerald Häfner (Germany)

European Conservatives and Reformists	Ashley Fox (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Helmut Scholz (Germany)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Morten Messerschmidt (Denmark)

Secretariat contact afco-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

AFCO responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the preparation and proceedings of conventions and intergovernmental conferences;
- the implementation of the EU Treaty and the assessment of its operation;
- the institutional consequences of enlargement negotiations of the Union;
- interinstitutional relations, including, in view of their approval by Parliament, examination of interinstitutional agreements pursuant to Rule 127(2) of the Rules of Procedure;
- uniform electoral procedure;
- political parties at European level, without prejudice to the competences of the Bureau;
- the determination of the existence of a serious and persistent breach by a Member State of the principles common to the Member States;
- the interpretation and application of the Rules of Procedure and proposals for amendments thereto.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarIAFCO>

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality - FEMM

Chair	Mikael Gustafsson	
		
		Sweden - GUE/NGL

Email mikael.gustafsson@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Livia Járóka	Hungary - EPP
	Edite Estrela	Portugal - S&D
	Elisabeth Morin-Chartier	France- EPP
	Barbara Matera	Italy - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in FEMM

European People's Party	Mariya Gabriel (Bulgaria)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Britta Thomson (Denmark)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Antonyia Parvanova (Bulgaria)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Marije Cornelissen (Netherlands)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Marina Yannakoudakis (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Inês Cristina Zuber (Portugal)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Tadeusz Cymanski (Poland)

Secretariat contact femm-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

FEMM responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- the definition, promotion and protection of women's rights in the Union and related Community measures;
- the promotion of women's rights in third countries;
- equal opportunities policy, including equality between men and women with regard to labour market opportunities and treatment at work;
- the removal of all forms of discrimination based on sex;
- the implementation and further development of gender mainstreaming in all policy sectors;
- the follow-up and implementation of international agreements and conventions involving the rights of women;
- information policy on women.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlFEMM>

Committee on Petitions - PETI

Chair	Erminia Mazzoni 	Italy - EPP
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Email erminia.mazzoni@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Chrysoula Paliadeli	Greece - S&D
	Willy Meyer	Spain - GUE/NGL
	Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo	Spain - EPP
	Elena Basescu	Romania - EPP

Coordinators of the political groups in PETI

European People's Party	Peter Jahr (Germany)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Victor Boştinaru (Romania)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Adina-Ioana Vălean (Romania)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Margrete Auken (Denmark)
European Conservatives and Reformists	Giles Chichester (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Nikolaos Chountis (Greece)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Nikolaos Salavrakos (Greece)

Secretariat contact peti-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

PETI responsibilities

Committee responsible for:

- petitions;
- relations with the European Ombudsman.

The Committee often responds to petitions from EU citizens by working to resolve possible infringements of citizens' rights under the Treaty and by cooperating with national, regional and local authorities on issues related to the application of European laws on such subjects as the environment, social affairs, freedom of movement and so on.

Website <http://tinyurl.com/europarlPETI>

SPECIAL COMMITTEE

Special Committee on Organised Crime, Corruption and Money Laundering - CRIM

Chair	Sonia Alfano	
		
		Italy - ALDE

Email sonia.alfano@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Rosario Crocetta	Italy - S&D
	Rui Tavares	Portugal - Greens/EFA
	Timothy Kirkhope	UK - ECR
	Cornelis de Jong	Denmark - GUE/NGL

Coordinators of the political groups in CRIM

European People's Party	Véronique Mathieu (France)
Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats	Tanja Fajon (Slovenia)
Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe	Bill Newton Dunn (UK)
Greens/ European Free Alliance	Bart Staes (Belgium)
European Conservatives and Reformists	James Nicholson (UK)
European United Left/ Nordic Green Left	Søren Bo Søndergaard (Denmark)
Europe of Freedom and Democracy	Mario Borghezio (Italy)

Secretariat contact crim-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

The Committee's tasks are: the operation and development of the common fisheries policy and its management;

- analyse and evaluate the extent of organised crime, corruption and money laundering and its impact on the Union and its Member States and to propose appropriate measures to enable the Union to forestall and counter these threats, including at international, European and national level;

- analyse and evaluate the current implementation of Union legislation on organised crime, corruption and money laundering, and related policies, in order to ensure that Union law and policies are evidence-based and supported by the best available threat assessments;
- examine and scrutinise the implementation of the role and activities of the Union home affairs agencies.

CRIM has a one year mandate to present its work to the Plenary of Parliament.

Website

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/crim/home.html>

INTERPARLIAMENTARY DELEGATIONS

Delegation for relations with the MERCOSUR countries

Chair	Luis Yáñez-Barnuevo García 	Spain - S&D
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Email luis.yanez@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Nuno Melo	Portugal - EPP
	Jean-Pierre Audy	France - EPP


Secretariat contact dmer@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

This Delegation's remit covers relations with the four countries of Mercosur: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay. Pending ratification of Venezuela's accession to Mercosur, the relations with Venezuela are covered by the Delegation for relations with the countries of the Andean Community in cooperation with the Delegation for relations with the countries of Mercosur. Every year, the Members of the Delegation visit the region and receive visits from members of the national parliaments from the Mercosur countries and from the Mercosur Parliament (Parlasur). The Members of the Delegation are also Members of the EuroLat Parliamentary Assembly and meet their Mercosur counterparts also on the occasion of the Assembly's activities.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dmer/home.html>

Delegation EU-Andean Community

Chair	Luis de Grandes Pascual	
		
		Spain - EPP

Email luis.degrandespascual@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Cătălin Sorin Ivan	Romania - S&D
	Izaskun Bilbao Barandica	Spain - ALDE

Secretariat contact dand@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies


This Delegation's remit covers relations with the four countries of the Andean Community: Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru. Pending ratification of Venezuela's accession to Mercosur, the Delegation also still covers relations with Venezuela, in cooperation with the Delegation for relations with the countries of Mercosur.

Every year, the Members of the Delegation participate in two visits to the region and receive visits from members of the national parliaments from the Andean Community countries and of the Andean Parliament (Parlandino). The Members of the Delegation are also Members of the EuroLat Parliamentary Assembly and meet their Andean counterparts also on the occasion of the Assembly's activities.

Members of the Delegation have participated in election observations in the countries of the region.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dand/home.html>

Delegation EU- Arab Peninsula (DARP)

Chair	Angelika Niebler 	Germany - EPP
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Email angelika.niebler@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Holger Kraemer	Germany - ALDE
	Claude Moraes	United Kingdom - S&D

Secretariat contact darp@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

The Delegation for relations with the Arab Peninsula is responsible for maintaining relations between Parliament and the countries of the Peninsula (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen) and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The delegation was created in 1979, the year of the first direct elections to the European Parliament, and its work represents an expression of keen interest in the democratisation process in the region, particularly with those states which possess functioning parliamentary institutions. The delegation's missions also make it possible to highlight Parliament's priorities, particularly in the field of human rights.

In addition, the delegation monitors closely the negotiations towards the signature of a free trade agreement between the EU and the GCC, which is intended to provide a new institutional framework for commercial and political relations between the two parties.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/darp/home.html>

Delegation EU - Australia and New - Zealand (DANZ)

Chair	Mara Bizzotto	
		
		Italy - EFD

Email mara.bizzotto@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Ioannis Tsoukalas	Greece - EPP
	Axel Voss	Germany - EPP

Secretariat contact DANZ@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

Since 1981 there have been regular inter-parliamentary meetings (IPMs) between the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Australia and New Zealand and its counterparts in the two countries.

The current basis for the EU-Australia relationship is the EU-Australia Partnership Framework that was adopted in Paris in October 2008 and the Joint Declaration on relations between Australia and the European Union adopted in 1997.

The framework for the EU-New Zealand relationship is the EU-New Zealand Joint Declaration on Relations and Cooperation which was adopted in Lisbon in September 2007. The meetings of the delegation with their counterparts are the focal point for the inter-parliamentary element of the relationship between the European Union and Australia and New Zealand.

The regular agenda items in the parliamentary meetings cover areas such as trade; agriculture; energy; environment and climate change; development and economic cooperation; science and technology; the promotion of global and regional security in the Asia-Pacific region, countering terrorism, and human rights.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/danz/home.html>

Delegation EU-India

Chair	Graham Watson 	United Kingdom - ALDE
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Email graham.watson@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Charalampos Angourakis	Greece - GUE-NGL
	Lena Kolarska-Bobinska	Poland - EPP

Secretariat contact D-IN@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

Meetings between the European Parliament and the Lok Sabha (the lower chamber of the Indian Parliament) have taken place since 1981. For many years the European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the Countries of South Asia and the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) had responsibility for the relationship with India and 12 inter-parliamentary meetings (IPMs) took place.

In 2007 the European Parliament set up a specific delegation for relations with India. This was to take account of the growing importance of India to the European Union and the Strategic Partnership that was established in 2004. A number of visits by the European Parliament delegation have taken place since 2007, most recently in April-May 2012 when MEPs visited New Delhi and Chennai. On that occasion the focus of the visit was on climate change and renewable energy, security issues and trade.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-in/home.html>

Delegation EU-Mexico

Chair	Ricardo Cortes Lastra	
		
		Spain - S&D

Email ricardo.corteslastra@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Santiago Fisas-Ayxela	Spain - EPP
	Markus Ferber	Germany - EPP

Secretariat contact d-mx@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies


The Association Agreement between the EU and Mexico, signed in Brussels on 8 December 1997, provides for the creation of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), whose main task is to monitor the application of the agreement and to make proposals with a view to improving its operation. The committee comprises two delegations with an equal number of members from the European Parliament and from the Mexican Senate/Chamber of Deputies respectively. The Association Agreement, in addition to its commercial aspects, also includes sections on cooperation and political dialogue.

The committee, set up at the beginning of this legislative period, holds two meetings a year, alternately in Mexico and the EU. The Joint Parliamentary Committee's bureau also holds one or two meetings a year in order to programme the joint activities for the next semester, and define topics of common interest to be discussed at the next inter-parliamentary meeting.

At the Joint Parliamentary Committee's meetings, subjects falling within the Association Agreement and its three pillars - trade chapter, political dialogue and cooperation - are raised, and points of views are exchanged on the current political and economic situation in Mexico and the European Union. At each meeting, a Joint Declaration is adopted reflecting different positions of the JPC Members on a variety of issues and containing recommendations addressed to other association organs such as the Association Council and the Association Committee. The JPC also prepares and adopts Messages to the bilateral Summits.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-mx/home.html>

EU delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly Union for Mediterranean (UfM)

Chair	Martin Schulz	
		
		Germany - S&D

Email martin.schulz@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Sonia Alfano	Italy - ALDE
	François Alfonsi	France - EFA

Secretariat contact xp-empa@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

Parliamentary Assembly Union for Mediterranean was established as the Euro-Mediterranean parliamentary Assembly in Athens on 22-23 March 2004, to become the parliamentary dimension of the Partnership set up by the Barcelona Declaration of November 1995.

It consists of 280 members: 130 EU members (81 members from the 27 EU national Parliaments - three from each Parliament - and 49 members from the European Parliament), ten members from new European Mediterranean partner countries (two for each delegation from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Monaco and Montenegro), 130 members from the ten countries on the Southern and Eastern shores of the Mediterranean (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey), and ten members from Mauritania.

There are five standing Committees:


- Committee on Political Affairs, Security, and Human Rights;
- Committee on Economic and Financial Affairs, Social Affairs, and Education;
- Committee on Improving Quality of Life, Exchanges between Civil Societies, and Culture;
- Committee on Women's Rights in Euromed countries;
- Committee on Energy, Environment, and Water.

The PA-UfM Bureau may establish, upon request of the Assembly, one or more working groups. The Bureau shall establish the nature, duration, number of members, composition, remit and reporting obligations of such working groups.

The PA-UfM is a consultative institution. Its resolutions and recommendations focus on the partnership's objectives and areas of cooperation and are not legally binding. At present, the PA-UfM is the main parliamentary dimension of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM), which absorbed the Barcelona Process and was officially launched at the Summit of the Heads of State and Government of 43 countries held in Paris on 13 July 2008.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dmed/home.html>

Delegation for relations with South Africa

Chair	Michael Cashman	
		
		United Kingdom - S&D

Email michael.cashman@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Judith Sargentini	Netherlands - Greens/EFA
	Alf Svensson	Sweden - EPP

Secretariat contact D-ZA@europarl.europa.eu


Presentation and competencies

Inter-parliamentary relations with South Africa were frozen during the long apartheid years. The European Parliament had, nevertheless, supported the anti-apartheid struggle and backed the financing of the humanitarian aid via NGOs in South Africa. This demonstration of solidarity on the European side became most evident when in 1988, while Nelson Mandela was still in prison, the European Parliament honoured him with the first Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought.

With the dawn of a new democratic order in 1994, the European Parliament immediately created a Delegation for Relations with South Africa. Since then, the longstanding relations between the two Parliaments have further strengthened and deepened. Two Inter-parliamentary meetings with the “Rainbow nation” are organised a year, alternately in Europe and South Africa. In 2006 the European Union (EU) launched a Strategic Partnership with South Africa - considering it an “anchor country” for the entire African continent. The European Parliament Delegation provides the upgraded EU-South Africa relations and political dialogue with a dedicated and substantive parliamentary dimension.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-za/home.html>

Delegation of ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly

Chair	Louis Michel	
		
		Belgium - ALDE

Email louis.michel@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Patrice Tirolien	France - S&D
	Peter Štastný	Slovakia - EPP

Secretariat contact acp@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

The ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly was created out of a common desire to bring together the elected representatives of the European Community - the Members of the European Parliament - and the elected representatives of the African, Caribbean and Pacific states ("ACP countries") that have signed the Cotonou Agreement: it is the only institution of its kind in the world. It is the only international assembly in which the representatives of various countries sit together regularly with the aim of promoting the interdependence of North and South. Since the entry into force of the Treaty on European Union and EU enlargement it has acquired a more prominent role. A substantial part of the work of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly is directed towards promoting human rights and democracy and the common values of humanity, and this has produced joint commitments undertaken within the framework of the UN conferences.

The representatives of the 78 ACP states who, under the Cotonou Agreement, must be members of Parliament, meet their 78 European Parliament counterparts in plenary session for one week twice a year. The Joint Parliamentary Assembly meets alternately in an ACP country and an EU country. The institution is governed by common, democratic rules. Two co-presidents who are elected by the Assembly direct its work. Twenty-four vice-presidents (12 European and 12 ACP) who are also elected by the Assembly constitute the Bureau of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly, together with the two co-presidents. The Bureau meets several times a year in order to ensure the continuity of the work of the Joint Parliamentary Assembly and to prepare new initiatives aimed notably at reinforcing and improving cooperation. It also considers topical political questions and adopts positions on all human rights cases.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dacp/home.html>

Delegation EU - Afghanistan

Chair	Thijs Berman	
		
		Netherlands - S&D

Email thijs.berman@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Philippe Juvin	France - EPP
	Pino Arlacchi	Italy - S&D

Secretariat contact d-af@europarl.europa.eu


Presentation and competencies

Relations between the European Parliament and the Afghan Wolesi Jirga (lower House) were inaugurated during the 2004-2009 legislature. A first *ad-hoc* Delegation of the European Parliament visited the country in July 2005, aimed at deepening the understanding of the political situation before the first parliamentary elections. The next Inter-parliamentary contact took place in Strasbourg, in December 2006, with an official visit of the then Speaker of the Wolesi Jirga, Mr. Qanooni.

Marking the willingness of the European Parliament to strengthen nascent democratic institutions in the country, a fully-fledged Delegation for relations with Afghanistan was constituted immediately after the 2009 European elections - making it one of the youngest of the European Parliament. Due to the delicate situation prevailing in Kabul, inter-parliamentary exchanges have, since, taken place mainly by video-conference; the Chair of the Delegation was nonetheless entrusted to represent the EP in January 2010 (inauguration of the Wolesi Jirga, Kabul) and, more recently, at the Bonn II International Conference on the future of Afghanistan, in November 2011, which the EP was invited to observe.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-af/home.html>

Delegation EU - Belarus

Chair	Filip Kaczmarek 	Poland - EPP
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Email filip.kaczmarek@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Valdemar Tomaševski	Lithuania - ECR
	Justas Vincas Palenckis	Lithuania - S&D

Secretariat contact d-by@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies


The European Parliament delegation for relations with Belarus, established in 1994, does not have at present official relations with the parliament or the government of the regime in Belarus, due to its failure to conduct free and fair elections, to establish rule of law and to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people in Belarus.

However, the delegation maintains an active and close dialogue with the representatives of the democratic opposition, independent nongovernmental organisations and civil society.

Due to the repeatedly refused entrance visas by the authorities in Minsk, the delegation has been unable to travel to Belarus in recent years, however it meets regularly in Brussels and in Strasbourg to discuss the developments in EU policy towards Belarus, to assess the political and economic situation in Belarus as well as to provide recommendations to the Council of the EU and the European Commission regarding possible further steps to improve the situation of democracy, human rights and rule of law in Belarus and to move this important neighbouring country closer to the EU.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-by/home.html>

Delegation EU - Canada

Chair	Philip Bradbourn	
		
		United Kingdom - ECR

Email philip.bradbourn@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Elisabeth Jeggle	Germany - EPP
	Wolf Klinz	Germany - ALDE

Secretariat contact d-ca@europarl.europa.eu

Presentation and competencies

The EP/Canada Delegation is one of the oldest Delegations established by the European Parliament (first meeting: March 1975). The annual EP/Canada inter-parliamentary meetings (IPMs) have generally underlined the excellent state of relations between the two counterparts. Interparliamentary meetings take place alternating between Canada and Brussels or Strasbourg. The 35th IPM took place 27 October - 1 November 2012 in Ottawa and Newfoundland and discussed economic and trade agreements, energy security, immigration and agriculture and fisheries.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-ca/home.html>

Delegation EU - Cariforum

Chair	David Martin 	UK - S&D
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Email david.martin@europarl.europa.eu

Vice-Chairs	Eleni Theocharous	Cyprus - EPP
	Niccolo Rinaldi	Italy - ALDE

Secretariat contact inta-secretariat@europarl.europa.eu


Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament gave its assent to the Economic Partnership Agreement CARIFORUM-EC on 25 March 2009. It is the first full EPA to be concluded and implemented. Its article 231 provides for the creation of a CARIFORUM-EU Parliamentary Committee, whose main task is to monitor the application and management of this commercial agreement. It also states that the Parliamentary Committee shall cooperate with the Joint Parliamentary Assembly provided for in Article 17 of the Cotonou Agreement, and be able to request of the Joint CARIFORUM-EU Council specific relevant information regarding the implementation of the Agreement and make recommendations to the same Council, as well as to the CARIFORUM-EU Trade and Development Committee.

The Parliamentary Committee comprises two delegations with an equal number of members from the European Parliament and from Parliaments of the CARIFORUM states respectively. The decision to establish the permanent European Parliament Delegation to the Committee was taken on 15 June 2010 and a constituent meeting of the delegation was held on 8 September 2010. Out of the 15 members of the EP delegation, nine are from the Committee on International Trade and six from the Committee on Development. The first meeting of the CARIFORUM-EU Joint Parliamentary Committee took place on 15 and 16 June 2011.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dcar/home.html>

Delegation EU-Central America

Chair	Emine Bozkurt	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo	Spain - EPP
	Inés Zuber	Portugal - GUE

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Presentation and competencies


This Delegation's remit covers relations with the countries of Central America: Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama as well as Cuba. Besides bilateral contacts with the countries in the region, the Central American Parliament (Parlacen), created following the wars which devastated the region, has been our leading partner in this region since its inception.

Every year, Members of the Delegation participate in two visits to the region and receive visits from members of the region's national parliaments and from members of the Central American Parliament. The Members of the Delegation are also Members of the EuroLat Parliamentary Assembly and meet their Central American counterparts on the occasion of the Assembly's activities too.

Members of the Delegation have participated in election observations in the countries of the region.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dcam/home.html>

Delegation EU-Chile

Chair	Correia De Campos Antonio Fernando 	Portugal - S&D
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Vice-Chairs	Pilar Ayuso	Spain - EPP
	Georgios Papanicolaou	Greece - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

Article 9 of the Association Agreement between the EU and Chile, signed in Brussels on 18 November 2002, provides for the creation of a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), whose main task is to monitor the application of the agreement and to make proposals with a view to improving its operation. The committee comprises two delegations with an equal number of members from the European Parliament and from the Chilean Senate/Chamber of Deputies respectively. The Association Agreement, in addition to its commercial aspects, also includes sections on cooperation and political dialogue.

The committee, set up at the beginning of this legislative period, holds two meetings a year, alternately in Chile and the EU. The Joint Parliamentary Committee's bureau also holds one or two meetings a year in order to programme the joint activities for the next semester, and define topics of common interest to be discussed at the next inter-parliamentary meeting.

At the Joint Parliamentary Committee's meetings, subjects falling within the Association Agreement and its three pillars – trade chapter, political dialogue and cooperation – are raised, and points of view are exchanged on the current political and economic situation in Chile and the European Union. At each meeting, a Joint Declaration is adopted reflecting different positions of the JPC Members on a variety of issues and containing recommendations addressed to other association organs such as Association Council and Association Committee. The JPC also prepares and adopts Messages to the bilateral Summits such as the EU-Chile Summit which took place on 17 May 2010 in Madrid.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-cl/home.html>

Delegation EU-China

Chair	Crescenzo Rivellini	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Victor Boştinaru	Romania - S&D
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Presentation and competencies


The European Parliament's delegation for relations with the People's Republic of China was established following the first direct elections in 1979 and inter-parliamentary meetings have been taking place since 1980.

EU relations with China were established in 1975 and are governed by the 1985 EU-China Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The EU is China's biggest trading partner, while China is the EU's largest source of imports and second largest two-way trading partner. Annual summits and regular political, trade and economic dialogues are held, including over 50 thematic dialogues and agreements.

The main task of the delegation is to maintain relations with the National People's Congress (NPC) through regular inter-parliamentary meetings. The delegation is also the focal point for relations with the Legislative Councils of the Special Administrative Regions (SAR) of Hong Kong and Macao.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-cn/home.html>

Delegation EU-Croatia

Chair	Gunnar Hökmark 	Sweden - EPP
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Vice-Chairs	Tanja Fajon	Slovenia - S&D
	Kent Johansson	Sweden - ALDE

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Presentation and competencies

On 29 October 2001, the European Communities and their Member States concluded in Luxembourg an Association and Stabilisation Agreement (SAA) with Croatia.

An SAA represents the signatories' commitment to complete over a transition period a formal association with the EU. The Stabilisation and Association Process is the main contribution of the EU, launched in 1999 at the end of the Kosovo conflict, to the political and economic rehabilitation of the countries of the Western Balkans, with a view to their integration into the EU in due course.

Pending the entry into force of the SAA (1st February 2005), the European Parliament decided, on 10 March 2004 and on 14 September 2004, to establish a delegation to the EU-Croatia Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC), on the occasion of the inauguration of the 6th legislature. In fact, Art. 9 of the SAA states that: "*Political dialogue at parliamentary level shall take place within the framework of the Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committee...*"

Croatia formally applied for membership to the European Union in February 2003 and accession negotiations with Croatia were opened in October 2005. After concluding the negotiations, Croatian voted in a referendum in favour of joining the EU in January 2011 and the European Parliament endorsed EU enlargement to Croatia in December 2011. Once Croatia becomes an EU member state in 2013, the Delegation and the JPC will cease to exist.

The EU-Croatia JPC is composed of an equal number of Members of the EP and of the Croatian Parliament (Sabor). It meets twice a year, once in Croatia and once in one of the workplaces of the European Parliament. According to current practice, the representatives of the Government of Croatia, the EU Presidency in Office and the Commission are invited to address the JPC-meetings.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-hr/home.html>

Delegation EU - DCAS: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Mongolia

Chair	Paolo Bartolozzi	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Nicole Kiil-Nielsen	France - Greens/EFA
	Alfreds Rubiks	Latvia - GUE/NGL

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Presentation and competencies

The delegation evolved from the previous delegation for relations with the republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which established a working group for Central Asia in 1993. In 1994, a delegation for relations with Central Asia and Mongolia was constituted. Parliamentary Cooperation Committees (PCCs) have taken place on a regular basis with Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan since 2000 and with Tajikistan since 2010. The PCCs are a key element of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs) which came into force on 1 July 1999 and with Tajikistan on 1 January 2010 and provide the framework for the relationship between the EU and the four countries. A key role of the PCCs is to review the implementation of the PCA. They have the right to request information from the Cooperation Council which supervises the Agreement. The PCCs can also make recommendations to the Council.

Regular inter-parliamentary meetings (IPMs) take place with Mongolia and Turkmenistan.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dcas/home.html>

Delegation EU- Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia

Chair	Milan Cabrnock 	Czech Republic - ECR
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Vice-Chairs	Mojca Kleva	Slovenia - S&D
	Vytautas Landsbergis	Lithuania - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

The relations between the European Parliament and the parliaments of the republics of the South Caucasus - Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia - are conducted within the framework of the Delegation to the Parliamentary Cooperation Committees EU-Armenia, EU-Azerbaijan and EU-Georgia (PCCs), as provided for in the Partnership and Cooperation Agreements (PCAs). These Agreements were signed on 22 April 1996 in Luxembourg and entered into force on 1 July 1999.

The European Parliament Delegation for Relations with the three Caucasian Republics was constituted on 17 November 1994. Prior to this date, the area was covered by the Delegation for relations with the republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

The PCCs with the three countries were established in 2004. They exert parliamentary control over the implementation of the agreements and act as an open forum for debate on issues of common interest. The Members of the PCCs are kept informed of the outcome of the Cooperation Council and the Committee (executive) and can express its view in recommendations addressed to the Cooperation Committee, the authorities of the partner countries, the European Commission and the Council.

The European Parliament Delegation to the EU-Armenia, EU-Azerbaijan and EU-Georgia PCCs is composed of 18 members and 13 substitutes. They hold one meeting per year : one year in one of the working places of the European Parliament and the following year in the respective countries.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dsca/home.html>

Delegation Switzerland, Norway and the EU-Iceland and European Economic Area JPCs

Chair	<p style="text-align: center;">Pat the Cope Gallagher</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	Ireland - ALDE
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Email

Vice-Chairs	Anna Hedh	Sweden - S&D
	Thomas Ulmer	Germany - EPP

Secretariat contact

Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament's delegation for relations with Switzerland was established in 1981, with Iceland in 1987 and with Norway in 1982. The inter-parliamentary delegations meet usually once a year.

The EU-Iceland Joint Parliamentary Committee was established in 2010, following the opening of EU accession negotiations with Iceland in July 2010. Members of the EP delegation to this JPC are drawn from the SINEEA delegation. It replaces the EU-Iceland inter-parliamentary delegation and, as a JPC, meets twice a year.


The SINEEA delegation is also responsible for the European Parliament's relations to the Nordic Council, to the Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region and to the Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference and has permanent seats in these assemblies.

The delegation is also responsible for the relations to the West Nordic Council (The Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland). It meets with the West Nordic Council once a year on the basis of an inter-parliamentary delegation.

The European Economic Area Joint Parliamentary Committee (EEA JPC) was established in January 1994 in order to contribute, through dialogue and debate, to a better understanding between the EU and the EFTA States and to ensure democratic control in the fields covered by the EEA Agreement. The JPC expresses its views in the form of resolutions addressed to the EEA institutions, to the European Parliament and to the parliaments of Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. The EEA JPC is composed of an equal number of Members of the European Parliament and of the parliaments of Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein. Members of the Swiss Assembly participate in the meetings as observers. The JPC meets twice a year.

Website

Delegation to the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly

Chair	Kristian Vigenin	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Traian Ungureanu	Romania - EPP
	Ryszard Czarnecki	Poland - ECR
	Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy	Netherlands - ALDE
	Jacek Saryusz-Wolski	Poland - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

The EP Delegation to the EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly was created by a decision of the European Parliament on 6 May 2009 and constituted in the beginning of the 7th legislature (end of September 2009). The Assembly was established as the parliamentary dimension of the Eastern Partnership, the policy launched by the European Union for its Eastern neighbours to bring them closer, through new generation Association Agreements, including deep and comprehensive Free Trade Areas, avoiding new dividing lines in Europe, and to support, also through financial resources, these neighbours' efforts for political, economic and social reform. The European Parliament had already called for the creation of the Assembly during its 6th legislature. EURONEST, for the time being, is composed of 110 Members: 60 Members from the European Parliament and ten from each of the following countries (the Eastern Partners): Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. For political reasons, Belarus is not a member of the Assembly yet.


EURONEST is the institution for multi-lateral parliamentary dialogue and exchange among the Eastern Partners and between the MEPs and their Eastern Partner countries' homologues in several areas of common interest: stability, democracy, legal and standards approximation, trade, energy, people-to-people contacts and many others.

The EURONEST Parliamentary Assembly has four standing committees (Committee on Political Affairs, Human Rights and Democracy; Committee on Economic Integration, Legal Approximation and Convergence with EU Policies; Committee on Energy Security; Committee on Social Affairs, Education, Culture and Civil Society) and two Working Groups (on the Rules of Procedure and on Belarus).

Website DEPA <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/depa/home.html>

Website EURONEST PA <http://www.euronest.europarl.europa.eu>

Delegation EU-Iran

Chair	Tarja Cronberg	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Potito Salatto	Italy - PPE
	Cornelia Ernst	Germany - GUE/NGL

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Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament's delegation for relations with Iran was established following the 2004 European elections as a means of establishing a direct channel of communication between the Parliament and the Majlis of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

While this was at first largely a European Parliament initiative, the response from the Iranian side was positive. Following the first visit by a Delegation from the Majlis to Brussels in October 2006, the European Parliament Delegation travelled to Tehran in December 2007 in order to hold the 2nd EP/Iran inter-parliamentary meeting. The most recent inter-parliamentary meeting took place in Brussels in December 2008. A planned meeting in 2011 was cancelled by the Iranian side while in 2012 the EP side decided to call off the meeting in Iran as it was not possible to meet representatives of the opposition.

The EP/Iran meetings have offered a forum for open discussions between parliamentarians on subjects such as nuclear non-proliferation, the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking, climate change, and trade and investment relations. Dialogue on human rights has also featured on the agenda, and in particular the death penalty, women's rights, children's legal treatment, the position of ethnic and religious minorities, freedom of press and opinion. The inter-parliamentary meetings have also offered the opportunity for intensive contacts with the government and civil society.

Although there have been no recent inter-parliamentary meetings because of the unfavourable political climate, the EP delegation continues to meet regularly and to examine all aspects of EU-Iran relations and the internal situation in Iran.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-ir/home.html>

Delegation EU-Iraq

Chair	Struan Stevenson 	United Kingdom - ECR
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Vice-Chairs	Esther de Lange	Netherlands - EPP
	Silvia Costa	Italy - S&D

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Presentation and competencies


A Permanent ad hoc Delegation for relations with Iraq has been in place since February 2008 with the aim of establishing a regular dialogue between the European Parliament and the Iraqi Council of Representatives.

The two inter-parliamentary meetings, held in September 2008 (Brussels) and April 2009 kickked of parliamentary co-operation and provided the space for open debates on priority issues, such as: the situation of women in Iraq and family law provisions, security and regional issues, refugees and EU cooperation assistance.

There is a great deal of interest in enhancing cooperation in: education; health and environment; economy, investment & construction; oil, gas and energy; parliamentary development. By the European Parliament decision of 6 May 2009, the status of the Delegation was upgraded to the Permanent Delegation for relations with Iraq, with the constitutive meeting on 30 September 2009. Since then a total of four Interparliamentary-Meetings have taken place.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-iq/home.html>

Delegation EU - Israel

Chair	Bastiaan Belder	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Salvatore Tatarella	Italy - EFD
	Olga Sehnalová	Czech Republic - S&D

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Presentation and competencies

Set up following the direct elections of 1979, the Delegation for relations with Israel is one of Parliament's oldest delegations. The delegation is responsible for 'maintaining and developing Parliament's international contacts', while focusing on 'the parliamentary dimension', which in this case refers to relations with the Knesset.

The delegation holds regular working meetings and hearings to prepare for meetings in Israel or Strasbourg/Brussels with its Israeli equivalent. The 33rd meeting between the two delegations took place in Brussels in September 2008.

Depending on events in the region, the delegation can hold joint meetings with the relevant parliamentary committees (AFET, DROI and DEVE) or other delegations with responsibility for the region, such as the Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council or Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries.

Following the elections of June 2009, the new Delegation for relations with Israel was set up in September (for the 2009-2014 parliamentary term). It consists of 22 Members and is chaired by Mr Bastiaan Belder (EFD, NL).

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-il/home.html>

Delegation EU-Japan

Chair	Johannes Cornelis van Baalen 	Netherlands - ALDE
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Vice-Chairs	Sandra Kalniete	Latvia - EPP
	Artur Zasada	Poland - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

The EU's relationship with Japan is founded on the 2001 EU-Japan Action Plan. The parliamentary Delegation was created in 1979 and has held yearly meetings since. , alternatively in Japan and in one of the places of work of the EP. Additionally, the Bureau of the Delegation or specialised working groups and Committee delegations may visit their counterpart to examine specific subjects.

The agenda items of the Inter-parliamentary meetings cover areas such as trade, economic and financial issues, environment and climate change, security in the Pacific region, human rights, cooperation in the field of science, technology & innovation. Currently, the key topic of the EU-Japanese dialogue is the process towards a deep and comprehensive EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-jp/home.html>

Delegation EU - Korean Peninsula

Chair	Herbert Reul 	Germany - EPP
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Vice-Chairs	Gerald Hafner	Germany - EFA
	Anna Rosbach	Denmark - ECR

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Presentation and competencies

The Delegation for Relations with the Korean Peninsula, which was created at the beginning of the 6th Parliamentary term in 2004, covers relations with both States on the Peninsula: the Republic of Korea (RoK, South) and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK, North). The Korea delegation holds regular meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg to follow developments on the Korean Peninsula.

Inter-parliamentary meetings with the National Assembly of South Korea take place twice a year, once in Europe (either Brussels or Strasbourg) and once in Seoul. Inter-parliamentary meetings with the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK take place less regularly, but importance is attached to keeping channels of communication open.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dkor/home.html>

Delegation EU-Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Chair	Jorgo Chatzimarkaki 	Germany - ALDE
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Vice-Chairs	Nicolaos Salavrakos	Greece - EFD
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Presentation and competencies

The EU-Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Joint Parliamentary Committee was established in 2004 and is composed of an equal number of Members of the European Parliament and the Assembly of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The JPC meets twice a year.

The task of the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) is to consider all aspects of relations between the EU and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and, in particular, the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement.

The JPC may make recommendations to the European Parliament, to the Assembly and Government of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, to the Council of the EU and to the European Commission.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-mk/home.html>

Delegation EU- Maghreb

Chair	Pier Antonio Panzeri	
		Italy - S&D

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Vice-Chairs	Paul Rübige	Austria - EPP
	Robert Rochefort	France - ALDE

Secretariat contact

Presentation and competencies

The Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries and the Arab Maghreb Union (including Libya) was set up following the direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979. It is responsible for relations with the following states: Algeria, Mauritania, Morocco, Libya and Tunisia. Regular meetings with each of these countries have been taking place since the 1980s. Meetings with Mauritania began in 1998 and meetings with Libya have been held since 2002. Meetings with delegations from the Arab Maghreb Union were held only in the early 1990s. Since the 6th meeting in 1994, however, there has been no further official contact. Western Sahara no longer falls under the Delegation's remit. An ad hoc Delegation for Western Sahara was set up under the chairmanship of Ioannis Kasoulides and visited, firstly, Algiers and Tindouf in September 2006 then Rabat and Laâyoune in January 2009 for purely humanitarian reasons. The ad hoc Delegation published a report containing a number of recommendations following this mission. Within the Delegation, a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) was set up with Morocco in May 2010 to reflect the advanced status with this country under the European Neighbourhood Policy. The JPC is co-chaired by Mr Panzeri.

Website

Delegation EU-Mashreq

Chair	Mario David 	Portugal - EPP
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Vice-Chairs	Marisa Matias	Portugal - GUE/ NGL
	Saïd El Khadraoui	Belgium - S&D

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Presentation and competencies


The Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries was set up in the wake of the first direct elections to the European Parliament in 1979. Between 1994 and 2004, the Delegation was also responsible for relations with the Gulf states. Since the 2004 elections, the Delegation's remit has been limited to the four countries in the Mashreq region: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

Over recent years, the situation in the Middle East has been a much discussed subject in meetings with representatives from the countries in the region, with a number of regional priority issues: the follow-up to the Annapolis Conference on re-launching the peace process between Israel and Palestine, the stabilisation of Iraq, the issue of Iraqi refugees and displaced persons, the crisis in Lebanon, press freedom and human rights in Arab countries and the prospect of a greater role for the EU and Jordan in promoting stabilisation.

Two observation committees were set up: the first to monitor parliamentary elections in Lebanon in 2005 and again in 2009 and the second to monitor the Egyptian presidential election in November 2005.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dmas/home.html>

Delegation EU-Moldova

Chair	Monica Luisa Macovei	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Tatjana Ždanoka	Latvia - Greens
	Iliana Malinova Iotova	Bulgaria - S&D

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Presentation and competencies

The relations between the European Parliament and the Parliament of the Republic of Moldova are conducted within the framework of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which came into force on 1 July 1998. This agreement is designed to provide a clear framework for the development of bilateral cooperation.

The PCA also provides for inter-parliamentary cooperation. The task of the EU-Moldova Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) is to consider all aspects of relations between the EU and the Republic of Moldova. It is an open forum for debate on matters of mutual interest. It was established in 1998 and meets once a year in one of the working places of the European Parliament and once a year in Chisinau, the capital of the Republic of Moldova. The EU-Moldova PCC is composed of an equal number of Members of the European Parliament and Members of the Moldovan Parliament.

The PCC expresses its views in forms of recommendations addressed to the Cooperation Council, the European Commission and the Moldovan authorities.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-md/home.html>

Delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly

Chair	Jacek Saryusz-Wolski	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Charles Tannock	United Kingdom - ECR
	Ioan Mircea Paşcu	Romania - S&D

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What is the Delegation for Relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly?

The European Parliament decided on 12 December 2001 to set up an Inter-parliamentary Delegation for Relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (D-NAT) composed of ten Members. D-NAT Members shall consist of Members of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE). The D-NAT is supported by a secretariat which consists of staff members of the SEDE secretariat.

The aim of the D-NAT is to bring forward the position of the EU, and of the European Parliament in particular, to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in view of further developing the relationship between the EU and NATO, while respecting the independent nature of both organisations. This is of particular importance in operations where both the EU and NATO are engaged, such as Afghanistan, Kosovo and in the fight against piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dnat/home.html>

Delegation EU- Palestinian Legislative Council

Chair	Emer Costello	
		Ireland - S&D

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Vice-Chairs	Kyriacos Triantaphyllides	Cyprus - GUE/NGL
	Margrete Auken	Denmark - EFA

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Presentation and competencies

An ad hoc Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Authority was set up on 3 November 1993. The standing Delegation was created on 12 December 1996. In the absence of a formal Palestinian state, the Delegation was named 'Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council'. The Delegation is responsible for 'maintaining and developing Parliament's international contacts', while focusing on 'the parliamentary dimension', which in this case refers to relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council.

The Delegation holds regular working meetings and hearings to prepare for meetings with its Palestinian equivalent, which are most often held in Palestine owing to the difficulties encountered by the members of the PLC in leaving their territory. The situation has become even more delicate since the isolation of the Gaza Strip in 2006. Meetings thus take place in Ramallah and Gaza. The most recent meeting between the two delegations was held in Ramallah and Gaza in February 2009, a few days after the end of the Israeli military operation.

Depending on events in the region, the delegation can hold joint meetings with the relevant parliamentary committees (AFET, DROI and DEVE) or other delegations with responsibility for the region, such as the Delegation for relations with Israel or Delegation for relations with the Mashreq countries.

Following the elections of June 2009, the new Delegation for relations with the Palestinian Legislative Council was set up in September (for the 2009-2014 parliamentary term). It consists of 22 members and is chaired by Ms Emer Costello (S&D, IRL).

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dplc/home.html>

Delegation EU - Pan-African Parliament

Chair	Michael Gahler 	Germany - EPP
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Vice-Chairs	Liisa Jaakonsaari	Finland - S&D
	Giles Chichester	United Kingdom - ECR

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Presentation and competencies


The European Parliament has maintained close contacts with the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) since the latter's creation in 2004. In 2006, the EP created the first ad hoc delegation to the PAP. At the start of this 7th parliamentary term, the European Parliament decided to create a permanent inter-parliamentary delegation.

These two parliaments are in charge of monitoring the implementation of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy adopted in Lisbon in 2007. The aim of the Strategy is to deepen the relations between Africa and the EU, addressing global challenges together.

In December 2007 the EP and the PAP organised a parliamentary pre-summit in Lisbon the day before the EU-Africa Summit and their Presidents were invited to deliver an address to the Heads of State and Government. Both delegations have met regularly in Brussels and Strasbourg as well as in Midrand (South Africa), where the PAP has its seat.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dpap/home.html>

Delegation EU-Russian Federation

Chair	Knut Fleckenstein	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Werner Schulz	Germany - Greens
	Alojz Peterle	Slovenia - EPP

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Presentation and competencies


The European Parliament delegation to the EU-Russia Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) was constituted on 1 December 1997 based on the EU-Russia Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and has since served as a stable platform for the development of political and economic cooperation and for continued dialogue between the two parliamentary institutions.

The EU-Russia PCC is composed of an equal number of Members of the European Parliament and of the two chambers of the National Assembly of the Russian Federation, the State Duma and the Federation Council. The PCC meets once or twice a year in one of the working places of the European Parliament, and also has regular Working Group meetings in different places in the Russian Federation.

The PCC follows and discusses the achievement of the objectives set out in the PCA. It also acts as a forum for dialogue and debate on issues of mutual interest within its parliamentary remit as well as with Russia's political leaders, members of the Federal Assembly, government and representatives of civil society.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-ru/home.html>

Delegation EU- South Asia

Chair	Jean Lambert 	United Kingdom - EFA
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Vice-Chairs	John Attard-Montalto	Malta - S&D
	Thomas Mann	Germany - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament's delegation for relations with South Asia was established in 2007, largely as the successor of the EP delegation for relations with the South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation.


It thus covers all SAARC countries except Afghanistan and India (with whom bilateral delegations exist), i.e. Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Nepal and Pakistan. EU relations with these countries, while still developing, are based on different legal grounds, reflecting diverse patterns of intensity in commercial exchanges, investment flows, development cooperation, technical assistance, or cultural links.

Thus, Cooperation Agreements exist with Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan. While these do not always explicitly foresee a parliamentary dimension, political dialogue is foreseen. In this spirit, meetings between legislators have regularly taken place, usually at the instigation of the EP Delegation: since 1981, more than 40 inter-parliamentary meetings have been held, covering all six countries.

While this activity has allowed EP priorities on democracy and human rights to be conveyed on the ground, it has also greatly helped MEPs in fulfilling their mandate - notably on trade-related issues, especially taking into account the enhanced role of the European Parliament after the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dsas/home.html>

Delegation EU - South East Asia and ASEAN

Chair	Werner Langen 	Germany - EPP
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Vice-Chairs	Robert Goebbels	Luxembourg - S&D
	Ivo Belet	Belgium - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

This delegation covers relations with the ten countries of South-East Asia which are members of ASEAN (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) and with ASEAN itself as an organisation. Every year the members of the delegation participate in a number of working missions to the region, hold inter-parliamentary meetings between the European Parliament and the respective national parliaments, and receive visits from members of the national parliaments of the ASEAN countries.

The ASEAN delegation also holds regular meetings in Brussels and Strasbourg to examine developments in the respective countries and the entire region.

Normally, Members of this delegation also represent the European Parliament at the annual meetings of the ASEAN Inter-parliamentary Assembly (AIPA), at which the European Parliament has observer status.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dase/home.html>

Delegation for relations with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo (South-East Europe - DSEE)

Chair	Eduard Kukan	
		
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Vice-Chairs	Jelko Kacin	Slovenia - ALDE
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Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament's delegation for relations with South-East Europe, (current name: Delegation for relations with Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo - DSEE) was constituted on 17 November 1994, as the "successor" to the Delegation for relations with the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, which had been functioning since 1981, then renamed delegation for relations with the republics of former Yugoslavia. It has been responsible for inter-parliamentary relations with five countries in South-East Europe, i.e. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (then, State Union of Serbia-Montenegro and now the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro), and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Albania was included in a three-country delegation with Romania and Bulgaria between 1991 and 1994, when it became part of the Delegation for relations with South-East Europe.

In 2002, the European Parliament decided to initiate informal inter-parliamentary relations with Kosovo, official relations with the Parliamentary Assembly of Kosovo started in May 2008, following the declaration of independence of the province on 17 February 2008, and, since the European elections of 2004, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia were "separated" from the regional delegation, due to their new or announced status of candidate countries for accession to the EU, and given new delegations to the respective Joint Parliamentary Committees.

Relations with Albania and Montenegro were upgraded in 2010 following the entry into force of the relevant SAAs and consequently Members of the European Parliament and Parliamentarians from Albania and Montenegro meet twice a year in separate Stabilisation and Association Parliamentary Committees.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dsee/home.html>

Delegation EU-Turkey

Chair	Hélène Flautre 	France - Greens-EFA
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Vice-Chairs	Maria Elena Koppa	Greece - S&D
	Georgios Koumoutsakos	Greece - EPP

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Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) functions on the basis of the Association Agreement (Ankara Agreement of 1963), the Additional Protocol (Customs Union Protocol of 1970) and several parliamentary decisions both by the European Parliament and the Turkish Grand National Assembly (TGNA).

The EU-Turkey JPC is composed of an equal number of Members of the European Parliament and of the Turkish Grand National Assembly. It meets in general twice a year, alternately in Turkey or in one of the working places of the European Parliament.

Since the opening of accession negotiations with Turkey, based on the European Council decision of December 2004, the JPC holds discussions on the relations between the EU and Turkey, scrutinises the application of the Customs Union and follows in particular the progress of the accession negotiations.

Representatives of the Cooperation Council, the EU Presidency-in-Office, European Commission and of the Turkish government regularly address the JPC meetings.

The European Parliament delegation to the EU-Turkey JPC also maintains regular contacts with Turkish civil society.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-tr/home.html>

Delegation EU-Ukraine

Chair	Paweł Robert Kowal 	Poland - ECR
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Vice-Chairs	Siiri Oviir	Estonia - ALDE
	Vilija Blinkevičiute	Lithuania - S&D

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Presentation and competencies

The European Parliament delegation to the EU-Ukraine Parliamentary Cooperation Committee (PCC) functions on the basis of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which came into force on 1 March 1998 and which has provided a clear framework for the development of political and economic cooperation between the two sides.


The EU-Ukraine PCC is composed of an equal number of Members of the European Parliament and of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. Underscoring the strategic importance of the bilateral relations, the PCC meets twice a year, alternately in one of the working places of the European Parliament and in Ukraine.

The PCC exerts parliamentary control over the implementation of the PCA, acts as an open forum for debate on issues of mutual interest and has in recent years provided an important impetus for successful democratic and market reforms in Ukraine and for its closer integration with the EU.

In addition to the PCC meetings, the delegation holds regular meetings to discuss important developments in EU-Ukraine relations and to exchange views with Ukraine's political leaders, members of its parliament and government, as well as representatives of civil society.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-ua/home.html>

Delegation EU-United States

Chair	Christian Ehler	
		
		Germany - EPP

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Vice-Chairs	Sarah Ludford	United Kingdom - ALDE
	Niki Tzavela	Greece - EFD

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Presentation and competencies

The origins of inter-parliamentary relations between the European Parliament and the United States Congress date back to 1972 when a US Congress delegation visited the European Parliament for the first time. This inter-parliamentary relationship is, indeed, the longest and most intensive one in the history of the European Parliament, both before and after the direct elections of 1979. The two delegations meet twice a year, in Europe and the US.

The political groups have traditionally regarded this EP delegation as the most important delegation. It is one of only three parliamentary delegations (besides those of Canada and Mexico) whose members are given the privilege of being received on the floor of the US Senate.

At the 50th inter-parliamentary meeting on 15-16 January 1999 in Strasbourg, both delegations decided to launch the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue (TLD), the formal response of the EP and the US Congress to the call in the New Transatlantic Agenda for enhanced parliamentary ties. The year 2000 marked the implementation of the TLD with the organisation of a first series of videoconferences that brought together legislators of the EP and the US Congress for an in-depth exchange of views on a number of topics. Subsequently, TLD activities expanded in order to include special "workshops" on subjects of particular interest, held in the framework of the biannual meetings, as well as a facilitating role for direct committee-to-committee exchanges between legislative committees of the European Parliament and the US Congress. TLD activities are also relevant as part of the "advisory group" instituted within the Transatlantic Economic Council launched by the EU and the US, on the occasion of the bilateral Summit held in Washington in April 2007.

Website <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/d-us/home.html>

EU Delegation to the Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly (LAT)

Chair	<p>José Ignacio Salafranca Sanchez-Neyra</p> 	Spain - EPP
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Vice-Chairs	Luis Manuel Capoulas Santos	Portugal - S&D
	Gianni Vattimo	Italy - ALDE
	Andrés Perelló Rodríguez	Spain - S&D
	Amalia Sartori	Italy - EPP
	Tomasz Poreba	Poland - ECR
	Norbert Glante	Germany - S&D
	Willy Meyer	Spain - GUE/NGL

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Presentation and competencies

The Euro-Latin American Parliamentary Assembly - EuroLat - was created in 2006 and it is the parliamentary institution of the Bi-regional Strategic Association established in June 1999 in the context of the EU-LAC (European Union-Latin American and Caribbean) Summits. EuroLat adopts and submits resolutions and recommendations to the various organisations, institutions and ministerial groups responsible for the development of the Bi-regional Strategic Association.

EuroLat is a joint multilateral Parliamentary Assembly composed of 150 members, 75 from the European Parliament and 75 from the Latin American component, including Parlatino (Latin American Parliament), Parlandino (Andean Parliament), Parlacen (Central American Parliament) and Parlasur (Mercosur Parliament). The Mexican and Chilean congresses are also represented in view of the existence of the Joint Parliamentary Committees EU/Mexico and EU/Chile.

Website Delegation <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/delegations/en/dlat/home.html>

Website EuroLat http://www.europarl.europa.eu/intcoop/eurolat/default_en.htm

