



Policy Guide to the European Parliament

2009-2014

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EurActiv fonctionne comme un réseau composé de 10 médias dont les rédactions sont réparties à travers l’Europe. Contrairement à d’autres médias, ce réseau n’est donc pas centralisé, et contrairement aux sites web institutionnels, il ne s’agit pas uniquement de traduction. Nous travaillons de manière décentralisée, chacune des versions s’adressant à un lectorat « national », tout en conservant l’objectivité et la profondeur de la version originale.

La multilinguisme du réseau EurActiv est au fondement même de notre approche, ce qui explique ce texte en français, en introduction de ce guide rédigé en anglais. Nous vous invitons à lire les dernières pages de ce guide, qui expliquent plus en détail les

sections EurActiv CrossLingual.

Depuis 10 ans, EurActiv.com s’est développé à Bruxelles, en anglais, français et allemand. Les cinq années suivantes ont été marquées par l’élargissement du réseau et par un enrichissement de notre savoir-faire national. Nous nous sommes initialement concentrés sur les pays d’Europe centrale, où le besoin d’information de qualité professionnelle sur les politiques européennes était le plus criant. Nous osons affirmer que ce n’est plus le cas aujourd’hui, car nos partenaires sont devenus une source majeure d’information sur les politiques européennes.

Plus récemment, nous nous sommes développés à l’ouest, sur des marchés plus grands et plus compétitifs. Les lancements d’EurActiv.com.tr à Istanbul (2007), d’EurActiv.fr à Paris (2008) et d’EurActiv.de à Berlin (2009) ont été des étapes clef. Ici aussi, notre savoir-faire fait ses preuves. D’autres capitales vont suivre, notamment au Sud, après Madrid. Dans un futur plus

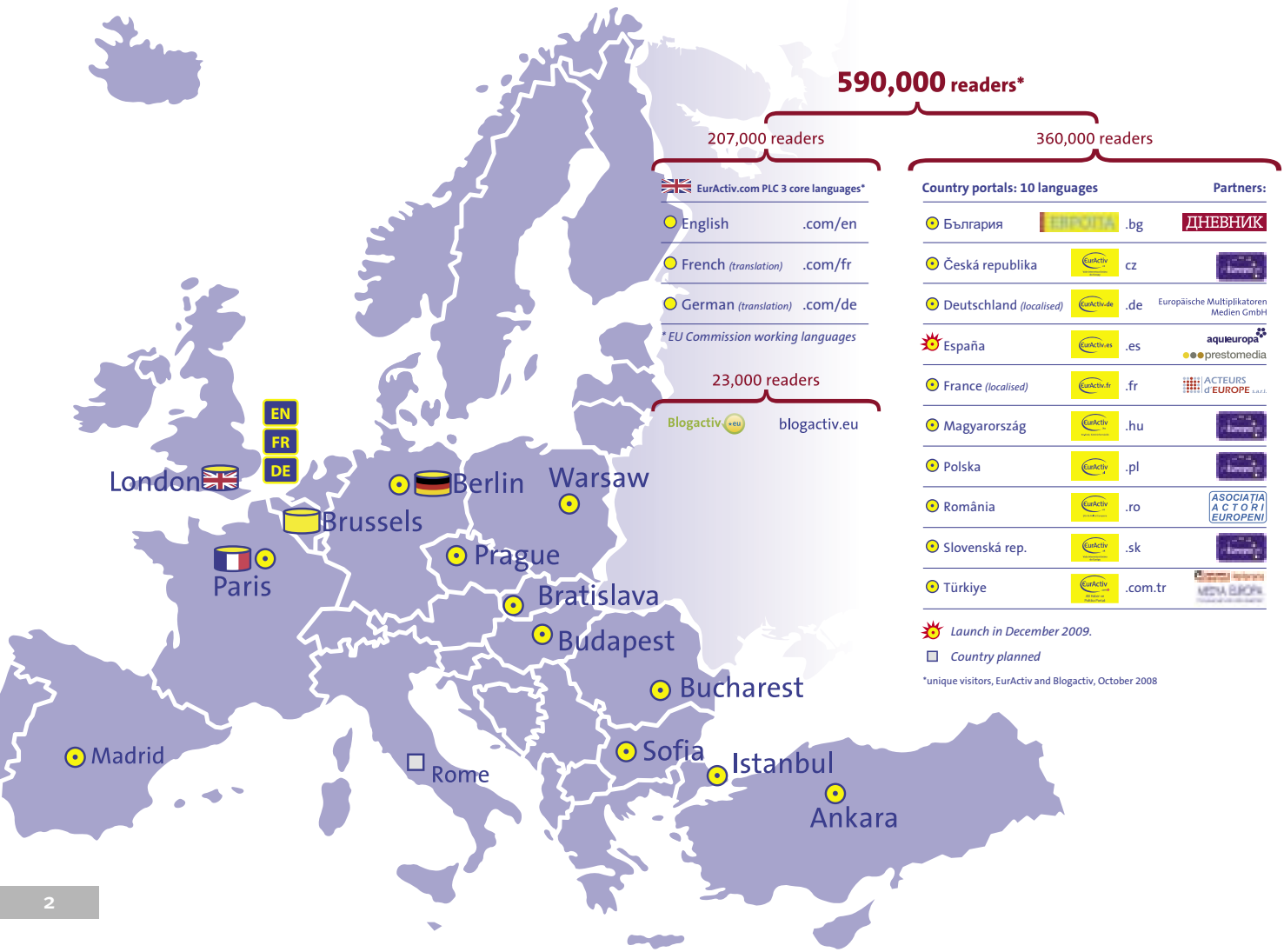
lointain, nous envisageons d’étendre nos activités aux relations de l’Europe avec d’autres continents, dans le cadre des politiques globales.

Nous ne cesserons pas de remercier nos sponsors publics et privés, dont le soutien a permis le succès passé et à venir d’EurActiv. Notre indépendance éditoriale est soulignée par notre accent sur la société civile, nos accords avec des ONG, et la confiance de nos nombreux lecteurs dans 10 langues.

Tout cela n’aurait pas été possible sans le dévouement des collaborateurs et des équipes présentes dans les capitales européennes. Leurs points de vue tantôt visionnaires, tantôt pratiques et réalistes, ont permis à tout le réseau de gagner en notoriété et en reconnaissance.

Un grand merci à tous et à toutes,

Christophe Leclercq, fondateur EurActiv.com & Ivan Stefunko, directeur du réseau EurActiv



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Introduction

Europe looks back — to the future

Anniversaries are excellent opportunities not only to reflect, but to see things in a wider context. For those ending in '0' or '5', the context is especially large. This year, both the European Union and EurActiv celebrate a significant one of each.

For Europe, the chance to think back 20 years to the momentous events of 1989 reminds us of how much society, politics and economics can change in less than a generation. And with only five years of hindsight, we see that even a project as big as the political integration of a continent can almost be taken for granted within just half a decade.

It has been 10 years since EurActiv was launched with a conference on transparency. And five years have passed since the birth of the EurActiv Network, which emerged just before the EU made its historic enlargement. Today, EurActiv's mission

of "Efficacité et transparence des Acteurs Européens" extends across 10 languages and 10 European capitals. In each of those countries, our autonomous editorial teams localise the information, with the aim of raising the level of European debate — in the language spoken locally.

We welcomed the challenges that 2009 brought in the form not only of anniversaries, but elections too. Hence, we felt it fitting that after 10 years of striving to guide you through the forest of EU policy, we should now present you with a Policy Guide to the EU's most democratic institution. What can you expect from the European Parliament over its five-year term?

The following pages give you a flavour of who the main players will be and what their top priorities are. We hope that you will find this publication engaging and illuminating, and that you will turn to it frequently as a reference, both in print and on EurActiv.com.

If this is achieved, it will be thanks also to our knowledge partners, Burson-Marsteller and Fleishman-Hillard, whose analyses are part of the overview you will gain via this Guide.

Throughout the 10 years of EurActiv's history, we have benefited from the support of the EU institutions and corporate sponsors. The current list for EurActiv.com is towards the back of this publication. The others for the Network are on the respective websites. We also thank our partner stakeholders, notably associations, think-tanks, consultancies and political parties for their cooperation.

By coincidence, this year offered both reflection and renewal. We invite you to join us in a little of the former, and a lot of the latter. Here's to an ever-dynamic — and ever-active — Europe!

*Daniela Vincenti-Mitchener & Rick Zedník,
EurActiv*



THE MAN AT THE HELM

Former Polish Prime Minister Jerzy Buzek was elected European Parliament president in July 2009, becoming the first politician from a former communist country to lead an EU institution.

Buzek was elected in the first round of voting with a comfortable majority of 555 votes against 89 cast for Swedish MEP Eva-Britt Svensson of the GUE/NGL group.

His election in Strasbourg was described as "historic" by European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

Others described the election as a "symbolic breakthrough" and a "proud moment for Poland".

Speaking to the new Parliament, Buzek said his election sent a "strong signal" to countries that joined the EU in 2004, describing it as a "homage to the millions of citizens who made the Iron Curtain fall down".

For the next five years, he added, there will be "no more 'us' [Central Europe] and 'you' [Western Europe], but one Europe".

The new president and former prime minister is seen as a man who values compromise and discussion. Indeed, he was supported by both the ruling liberal Civic Platform party and Polish President Lech Kaczyński, who hails from the conservative Law and Justice party, currently the country's strongest opposition force.

Buzek will hold the Parliament's top chair for two-and-a-half years, followed by "a member appointed by the [Socialist] S&D group for the second half of the legislature," as agreed by the leaders of the Parliament's three largest political groups — the centre-right EPP, the Socialists and the Liberals.

Foreword

by Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament

The European Union has gone through radical changes over the last five years, both politically and institutionally. The next five years will no doubt see some consolidation, but also great economic, environmental and institutional challenges.

For the European Parliament, once the Treaty of Lisbon enters into force the powers of the assembly will be greatly enhanced. I welcome the increased powers notably in setting the EU budget, agricultural policy and justice and home affairs. But with these powers comes an even greater responsibility to listen and act in the best interests of Europe's citizens.

The consequences of the economic crisis, the impact of demographic change and the best way to safeguard the European social model are among the issues in store for the new European Parliament over the next few years.

As for enlargement, Iceland, Croatia, Turkey and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia are official candidates. Others, such as Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo, also have a "prospect" of joining. Debates about whether they are ready to join, and possible dates for accession, will be high on the Parliament's agenda in the coming years.

Ensuring that Europe is competitive in the world, with both the private and public sectors investing greater amounts of GDP into innovation and research and development, is essential.

I am sure that improving Europe's energy security and interconnections and diversifying supply will become an even greater priority. On climate change, the switch to a low-carbon economy must be regarded as an opportunity for investment in new renewable industries and not as a threat to economic growth.

The December 2009 Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen will be of course crucial to this, and the European Parliament has already played a vital role in ensuring it

is the European Union that leads the world on reducing carbon emissions and fighting climate change. A global deal is needed but this should not be at the expense of developing countries.

The beginning of this millennium, I believe, will be marked by the greater involvement of women in all aspects of society. I welcome this, but there is a still tremendous amount of work to be done to ensure equality. The European Parliament will continue to play a major role in defining legislation on equal opportunities, non-discrimination and the respect of human rights.

Finally, new measures to prevent acts of terrorism will be examined by the European Parliament in the coming years. The balance between security and protection on the one hand and privacy and fundamental rights on the other will also be key issues.

Unexpected events will shape both the European Parliament and European Union's path over the next few years. But as the famous Danish physicist Niels Bohr said: "Prediction is very difficult, especially if it's about the future."

My term as European Parliament president will last until December 2011, and during that time I intend to act in the best interests of the Union's citizens. As president of the European Parliament it is my duty to do so.

We will bring debates to the people, where they belong. We need all the interaction we can get from the media.

In this regard, let me congratulate EurActiv on its 10th anniversary for having taken European debates to the national capitals in many member states, reaching out to multipliers like NGOs, local and regional politicians and other journalists.

“Preparing the European Union for the unexpected”



Parliament's new balancing act

Changing political dynamics... waiting for Lisbon

EUROPEAN VOTERS HAVE SPOKEN

The 2009 European elections, held simultaneously in 27 countries for the first time in history, ended in a clear victory for the centre-right European People's Party (EPP) and a defeat for the Socialists.

The EPP group saw 265 members elected to the new European Parliament compared with 184 MEPs for the Socialists (S&D). In the outgoing 785-member European Parliament, the former EPP-ED group had 284 MEPs to the Party of European Socialists' 215.

This time, the British Conservatives left the group after their leader, David Cameron, had decided to form a separate anti-federalist political group. Despite being deprived of some 29 British MEPs, the EPP remains by far the largest grouping in the 736-seat parliament.

The Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) obtained 84 seats, down from 103 in the previous legislature. The Greens/European Free Alliance group won 55 MEPs, up from 42 last time around.

The far-right Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty group collapsed during the last Parliament, due to irreconcilable differences between its constituent parties.

The new Parliament saw the emergence of a new far-right group, Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD), which has 32 members.

The Union for Europe of the Nations group (UEN), which had 44 members in the last legislature, does not feature in the new EU assembly. A new group was created, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) group, which counts among its 54 members 25 British Conservative and 15 Polish Law and Justice (PiS) MEPs.

The Confederal Group of the European Left/Nordic Green Left (GUE/NGL) is down from 44 MEPs in the last legislature to 35 in this one.

Despite the loss of the British Conservatives, who left the centre-right European People's Party group to create a new anti-federalist group, the EPP will remain the leading group in the 2009-2014 European Parliament, also drawing upon the backing of an overwhelming centre-right majority in the European Council. However, a set of fresh challenges await the new assembly.

The increase in the seat shares of small political groups at the expense of the EPP and the other main political groups - the centre-left Socialists and Democrats group (S&D) and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) - has indeed further fragmented parliamentary majorities.

The emergence of two new groups to the right of the EPP, the European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR) and the far-right Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD), will make it difficult for the EPP to rule without partners.

Grand or super-sized coalition?

The liberal ALDE group is the EPP's closest ally. Chaired by former Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, ALDE is likely to support many of the centre-right's legislative positions, especially regarding economic integration and market liberalisation. But the two do not command a majority and will need to reach out to other groups.

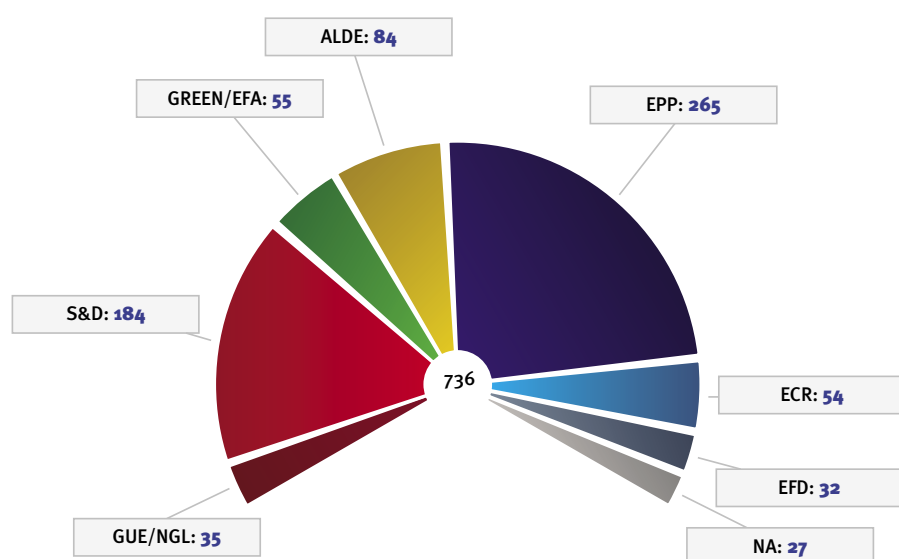
Indeed, an EPP-ALDE coalition only controls 47.4% of the seats. "This is not enough to command a simple majority, let alone an absolute majority, which is required in the second reading under the co-decision procedure to amend a Council common position," confirmed political analyst Simon Hix.

The London School of Economics professor underlines that with an average participation rate of 85% of MEPs in legislative votes, an absolute majority usually requires a coalition with about 60% of the seats. A coalition between the EPP, ECR and liberal ALDE would also not be enough, as it would command 54.9%.

Besides, it remains to be seen whether the EPP will be prepared to cooperate with the ECR, as members might clash with the openly Eurosceptic position of some in the newly-formed group.

The left also can no longer rally an absolute majority of deputies. Even with the ALDE, Greens/EFA and far-left GUE/NGL groups, S&D can count only on 358 votes, while at least 369 are needed for an absolute majority of all 736 MEPs.

Political analysts note that a 'grand coalition' between the EPP and S&D would control just over 60% of the seats, and a 'supersized coalition,' including ALDE, would be the only



viable options in the next legislature.

Left-right dialectic or centrists win all?

The 'grand coalition' scenario is given greater credence by the fact that much of the recent political discourse of centre-right parties in the large member states, like France and Germany, has focused on prioritising a social market economy and downplaying the role of competition in economic policy, said Hix.

This emphasis on what some call Christian conservatism rather than neo-liberal conservatism seems more in tune with traditional centre-left thinking.

This will surely affect coalition-building and voting behaviour on key legislative dossiers. Looking at the allocation of committee chairs, the challenge seems to lie in finding the right balance between a centre-right economic, single market and industrial policy with a leftist social, civil liberties and environmental agenda.

On the other side of the political spectrum, the S&D camp will have to deal with internal tension between those backing traditional socialist roots and wanting to re-establish a clear identity and those favouring a position closer to the pragmatic centre, especially after the socialists' latest defeat in German general elections.

As for the Greens, despite their electoral victory, they will be affected by the poor performance of their natural socialist allies. However, the strong position of Green parties in a number of key countries, like Germany and France, may encourage the victorious centre-right to adopt more environmentally-

friendly legislation.

Coalition building, experts say, might be affected in the long-term by the weakness of the new right-wing groups, which have aggregated individual members with very different agendas. One should not forget that the 2004-2009 Parliament saw the far-right Identity, Tradition and Sovereignty group quickly dissolve due to irreconcilable differences between its constituent parties. Such differences might be replayed in the current legislature.

Lisbon Treaty: More powers ... challenged by national parliaments

If the Lisbon Treaty is ratified in all 27 member states, the Parliament will gain further clout in European decision-making, while triggering new, improved working methods, greater budgetary powers and co-legislator status.

Each revision of the Treaties has progressively boosted the power of the European Parliament in relation to the other institutions. By getting more powers in areas like home affairs, agriculture and the EU budget, the Parliament will certainly punch its weight whenever suitable, as it did regarding the reappointment of European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

In addition, the Lisbon Treaty increases the role of national parliaments, which will be able to send the presidents of the Commission, the Council and the Parliament reasoned opinions on whether or not draft legislation complies with the principle of 'subsidiarity'. This principle prevents the EU from deciding matters on behalf of national, regional or

local authorities unless it adds value.

Some fear that the involvement of national parliaments will make the EU's legislative process more cumbersome. But "the involvement of national parliaments per se need not be a bad thing for European integration," according to Julia De Clerck-Sachsse, a research fellow at the Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS).

Experts and politicians have argued for years that a lack of national debate on EU issues contributes to citizens' present political apathy and low turnout at EU elections.

The recent ruling by the German constitutional court on the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty will effectively spark greater debate in Chancellor Angela Merkel's backyard, but also undermines the role of the European Parliament as it reasserts the power of the Bundestag and Bundesrat over EU affairs.

The European Policy Centre's founding chairman, Stanley Crossick, noted the constitutional court's decision is likely to "provoke parliaments in other member states to seek ways of controlling their governments when acting in the EU Council".

Such a scenario would challenge the European Parliament in its next mandate. The Parliament can surely make the case that its role is to safeguard democratic control of EU decision-making, added De Clerck-Sachsse, stressing that broader controversies over and beyond policy concerns will animate the next term.

*Daniela Vincenti-Mitchener,
EurActiv*

The growing influence of committees

Chairs and vice-chairs: Who’s who?

The European Parliament’s committees play a central role in shaping the political agenda of the assembly, as it is there that detailed policy debates take place. This setup makes the House more akin to the US Congress than to many of the EU’s national parliaments.

The distribution of committee chairmanships is decided in negotiations between the political groups on the basis of an unofficial system, which gives groups proportional representation according to their size (the so-called ‘D’Hondt method’).

Looking at which committee chairs went to which political group, it is clear that the European People’s Party (EPP) traded leadership of prominent committees to secure the presidencies of the Parliament and the European Commission. Indeed, five of the 10 most influential committees were assigned to S&D chairs (environment, civil liberties, employment, agriculture and transport), while the EPP got just three (industry, legal affairs and foreign affairs).

Of Parliament’s 22 committees, the EurActiv Policy Guide focuses on the 14 which deal with the bulk of EU legislation.

Chaired by centre-right French MEP Alain Lamassoure, the budget committee, not featured in this guide, will also have a prominent role during the Parliament’s next term as it will dig deeper into the EU budget review.

Agriculture

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Paulo De Castro (S&D, Italy)
Rareş-Lucian Niculescu (EPP, Romania)
José Bové (Greens/EFA, France)
Janusz Wojciechowski (ECR, Poland)
Marit Paulsen (ALDE, Sweden)

Budgets

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Alain Lamassoure (EPP, France)
Jutta Haug (EPP, France)
Alexander Alvaro (ALDE, Germany)
Jean-Luc Dehaene (EPP, Belgium)
Ivaylo Kalfin (S&D, Bulgaria)

Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Fernando Lopez Aguilar (S&D, Spain)
Kinga Gál (EPP, Hungary)
Sophia in’t Veld (ALDE, The Netherlands)
Salvatore Iacolino (EPP, Italy)
Kinga Göncz (S&D, Hungary)

Constitutional Affairs

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Carlo Casini (EPP, Italy)
Zita Gurmai (S&D, Hungary)
Rafal Kazimierz Trzaskowski (EPP, Poland)
Morten Messerschmidt (EFD, Denmark)
Syed Kamall (ECR, United Kingdom)

Culture and Education

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Doris Pack (EPP, Germany)
Helga Truepel (Greens/EFA, Germany)
Timo soini (EFD, Finland)
Lothar Bisky (GUE/NGL, Germany)
Morten Løkkegaard (ALDE, Denmark)

Development

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Eva Joly (Greens/EFA, France)
Michèle Striffler (EPP, France)
Nirj Deva (ECR, United Kingdom)
Iva Zanicchi (EPP, Italy)
Corina Cretu (S&D, Romania)

Economic and Monetary Affairs

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Sharon Bowles (ALDE, United Kingdom)
José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (EPP, Spain)
Arlene McCarthy (S&D, United Kingdom)
Theodor Dumitru Stolojan (EPP, Romania)
Edward Scicluna (S&D, Malta)

Employment and Social Affairs

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Pervenche Berès (S&D, France)
Elisabeth Lynne (ALDE, United Kingdom)
Ilda Figueiredo (GUE/NGL, Portugal)
Elisabeth Schroedter (Greens/EFA, Germany)
Thomas Mann (EPP, Germany)

Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Jo Leinen (S&D, Germany)
Corinne Lepage (ALDE, France)
Carl Schlyter (Greens/EFA, Sweden)
Bogusław Sonik (EPP, Poland)
Dan Jørgensen (S&D, Denmark)

Foreign Affairs

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Gabriele Albertini (EPP, Italy)
Fiorello Provera (EFD, Italy)
Ioan Mirces Paşcu (S&D, Romania)
Dominique Baudis (EPP, France)
Jean-Luc Mélenchon (GUE/NGL, France)

Industry, Research and Energy

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Herbert Reul (EPP, Germany)
Patrizia Toia (S&D, Italy)
Jens Rohde (ALDE, Denmark)
Anni Podimata (S&D, Greece)
Evzen Tosenovsky (ECR, Czech Republic)

Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Malcolm Harbour (ECR, United Kingdom)
Eija-Ritta Korhola (EPP, Finland)
Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D, France)
Lara Comi (EPP, Italy)
Louis Grech (S&D, Malta)

International Trade

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Vital Moreira (S&D, Portugal)
Robert Sturdy (ECR, United Kingdom)
Paweł Zalewski (EPP, Poland)
Laima Andrikienė (EPP, Lithuania)

Regional Development

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Danuta Hübner (EPP, Poland)
Giorgos Stavrakakis (S&D, Greece)
Markus Pieper (EPP, Germany)
Filiz Hakaeva Hyusmenova (ALDE, Bulgaria)
Michail Tremopoulos (Greens/EFA, Greece)

Transport and Tourism

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Brian Simpson (S&D, United Kingdom)
Dominique Riquet (EPP, France)
Peter van Dalen (ECR, The Netherlands)
Silvia Adriana Țicău (S&D, Romania)
Dieter-Lebrecht Koch (EPP, Germany)

Women’s Rights and Gender Equality

Chair and Vice-Chairs:

Eva-Britt Svensson (GUE/NGL, Sweden)
Livia Járóka (EPP, Hungary)
Edite Estrela (S&D, Portugal)
Elisabeth Morin-Chartier (EPP, France)
Barbara Matera (EPP, Italy)



MAKING EUROPE PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN THE WORLD

by Gabriele Albertini, chair

There is no doubt that European politics has to cope with a very difficult and complex foreign affairs agenda. The European identity is defined by what Europeans do all over the world, and the decisions they make regarding territorial tensions, conflicts and ongoing evolutions.

I believe that the first subject we should deal with, in a serious and courageous manner, is Afghanistan. The outcome of the election forces us to adopt a renewed strategy, indicating that political and social balance is still a long way from being achieved. The September 2009 attack on Italian military forces in Afghanistan provides further proof of this.

Moreover, the Middle East still represents an emergency for our committee. The region, considered a bridge and contact point with Asian culture, is significant for Europe. Much attention must be paid to the successful evolution of the ongoing peace process.

Looking a bit further afield to Iran, the post-electoral confirmation of the fundamentalist Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as president of the Islamic republic and the public demonstrations that followed in July 2009 are a cause for concern as they reveal a lack of openness towards any democratic development.

We really hope that after the expected ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the European Parliament and the EU institutional system as a whole can have an enhanced role when deciding upon the bloc’s external policies.

Although we have ideas and principles, we don’t always dispose of strong and effective tools to implement them. This sometimes presents an obstacle to portraying Europe’s identity and credibility among international actors. This is surely the underlying issue at stake.

Foreign Affairs

High expectations ahead

The escalating war in Afghanistan, the threat of nuclear proliferation, the challenge posed by climate change and the quest for energy security are just a few of the challenges the EU’s foreign and security policy will have to address in the next five years.

The Common Foreign and Security Policy and the European Security and Defence Policy are among the few policy areas in which citizens would like to see more, not less EU cooperation and integration.

The European Parliament’s direct policy tools are mostly limited to non-legally binding reports, opinions and resolutions. However, when combined with the *de facto* right to reject newly-nominated commissioners and – even more importantly – control a significant part of the foreign policy budget, the Parliament is in a good position to actively help shape the Union’s foreign policy.

In addition, the chamber has established itself as a respected global authority in the field of human rights and democratisation, for example by awarding the annual Sakharov Prize and conducting electoral observer missions.

The implementation of the Treaty of Lisbon, if it comes into force, will most likely take up much of the agenda of the European institutions, including the European Parliament, in the years to come. New provisions on the High Representative, the new European Diplomatic Service, enhanced cooperation, a single legal personality and structured corporation and new competences for energy security and climate change will reshape European foreign policy.

One of the most important tasks for the foreign affairs committee will be the confirmation of the High Representative, assuming that the Lisbon Treaty enters into force. The Parliament is likely to make he or she agree to a number of demands before giving its approval. Some of these have been voiced in the past:

- The adoption of an inter-institutional agreement between the Parliament and the Council defining their working relations in the field of external action, including regularising information procedures and sharing confidential information;

- The introduction of an ad hoc hearing procedure with the High Representative;

- Regular meetings between the Council’s political and security committee with chairpersons of the relevant Parliament committee and subcommittees on emerging crises or events concerning international security;

- Reinforcement of collaboration with the existing multilateral parliamentary assemblies and committee assemblies.

Around half of the committee’s members are new. The chair, Gabriele Albertini (EPP, Italy), has not been a member of this committee before. This is likely to enhance the influence of the political group coordinators who together set the agenda. Other veteran MEPs will also take the opportunity to “guide” their new colleagues as far as procedure and content are concerned.

Names to look out for are former Parliament President Hans-Gert Pöttering (EPP, Germany), Socialist group veteran Hannes Swoboda (S&D, Austria), Heidi Hautala (Greens, Finland), chair of the sub-committee on human rights and a former group leader, Arnaud Danjean (EPP, France), chair of the sub-committee on security and defence, former committee chair Elmar Brok, (EPP, Germany), former Polish European Affairs Minister Jacek Saryusz-Wolski (EPP, Poland), Alexander Graf Lambsdorff (ALDE, Germany), Charles Tannock (ECR, UK), Libor Roucek (S&D, Czech Republic), Jose Salafranca (EPP, Spain) and Ernst Strasser (EPP, Austria).

Robin Koch,
Burson-Marsteller

Economic & Monetary Affairs

Plunging deep into financial reform

The economic and monetary affairs (ECON) committee will maintain a high-level of alert as the EU embarks upon a far-reaching reflection on the causes of the financial and economic crises.

Responsible for the regulation and supervision of financial institutions and markets, the free movement of capital, economic and monetary policy, competition and state-aid rules and tax provisions, ECON will be at the forefront of the EU debate on economic policy coordination, which will be at the heart of a successful exit strategy.

Furthermore, as a result of the negotiations to elect a new president of the European Parliament, it was agreed to create a temporary committee on the financial crisis. This committee is chaired by Wolf Klinz (ALDE, Germany).

The practical demarcation between ECON and the temporary committee will need to be agreed. On the face of it, ECON will continue to take the lead on regulatory and legislative initiatives, while the temporary committee will carry out an in-depth investigation into the crisis, including by hosting hearings and interviews with experts.

Reshaping European financial markets

Clearly, the financial crisis and the resulting regulatory proposals to reshape European financial markets will be a major theme of this Parliament's ECON committee. One of the biggest tasks facing the committee will be the upcoming debate on future of micro- and macro-prudential financial supervision in Europe, and the need to carefully consider the impact this will have on sectoral directives.

The previous Parliament managed to reach agreement on significant financial services proposals resulting from the crisis, such as the Regulation on Credit Rating Agencies and the revised Capital Requirements Directive – the EU's framework for prudential banking capital.

However, most policymakers feel that significant reforms are needed – immediately, the committee will have to formulate positions on alternative investment funds and further sweeping revisions to the EU's prudential capital framework – and it is likely that further legislation will reshape the European market for over-the-counter (OTC) derivatives.

Beyond this will be a number of reviews of existing legislation, including the Markets

in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID), one of the most comprehensive pieces of European financial market legislation, which the Commission will review from the start of 2010.

Furthermore, other serious issues include accounting standards, responsible lending/borrowing (where ECON traditionally leads on mortgage credit and IMCO on consumer credit), governance of financial institutions, UCITS depositories, crisis management and winding up financial institutions.

High-profile MEPs join crisis fight

An interesting dynamic of the newly-formed committee is the breakdown of newly-elected MEPs versus incumbents. The ECON committee, perhaps owing to the political profile of the response to the credit crunch, has attracted some high-profile new members among the 52% of committee members who are newly-elected. One of the biggest challenges will be balancing the political pressures of the response to the financial crisis with the need to carefully consider such key and timely legislation.

*Carey Evans,
Fleishman-Hillard*

clearing, settlement and derivatives are also expected.

Initiatives from the committee will concern stability policy, the international financial architecture and tax evasion. Matters previously requested that will be pursued include principles of remuneration and corporate taxation.

There was a general view that attention also had to be given to monetary affairs, macroeconomic policy, recovery plans and broad economic guidelines as well as to legislation. The crisis has shown that there is a strong link between financial regulation and the health of markets that leads directly back to economic planning.

It was also considered a priority to follow up existing legislation with checks on implementation.

Employment and Social Affairs

Ready to beef up the social agenda

Whilst employment and social affairs policies remain the remit of EU member states, the European Parliament and its employment and social affairs committee (EMPL) have increasingly gained influence and legislated on matters which are clearly relevant to EU citizens in the current economic climate.

The previous parliamentary term illustrated the influence EMPL has on decision-making and its contribution to developing the social dimension of the EU's internal market. This was notable in terms of coordinated EU policies (the European Social Fund, the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund) and decisions on budget allocations, the development of the EU internal market (free movement of workers in the internal market, posting of workers, pensions rights), health and safety of workers and equal opportunities and anti-discrimination policies.

With the latest Eurostat figures showing the highest level of jobless workers for over ten years (15 million unemployed in the euro zone in July 2009), this issue is set to remain high on the agenda. Policymakers across the EU will be looking for every possible

assistance in addressing the corrosive and potentially volatile consequences of high unemployment. If the committee turns itself into a constructive player on this and other cross-committee issues, it could find itself with an increasingly central role.

A few Achilles heels managed by heavy-weights

Despite notable achievements such as granting temporary agency workers similar protection to that afforded to permanent workers, EMPL failed to reach agreement with national representatives on the extremely controversial Working Time Directive.

After five years of heated political debate, the Working Time Directive ended up in a deadlock at the final conciliation stage. This will most likely be revisited in the new Parliament. The committee will also have to solve the issue of improving the portability of supplementary pension rights during this mandate. Adopted at the June 2007 plenary, the file has been blocked in the Council since then.

Around two-thirds of the committee's membership is new. However, despite this high turnover, the leadership of the committee remains in the hands of a highly-

experienced team. Previous vice-chairs such as Liz Lynn (ALDE, UK), Ilda Figueiredo (Greens, Portugal) and Thomas Mann (EPP, Germany) have returned to their previous roles. The chairwoman, Pervenche Berès, is new, but is a heavyweight politician who brings ample experience to the position after spending five years chairing the economic and monetary affairs committee.

Working with other committees

The appointment of Berès, coupled with the current economic and employment environment, will probably see the EMPL committee increasingly follow inter-related issues with other committees. Such topics and partnerships include immigration and third-country workers, corporate governance, remuneration of CEOs, or safety of workers. However, the overall influence of the Socialists in the committee was reduced in comparison to the previous term, where they had as many MEPs as the EPP-ED group. The Socialists now rely on a third fewer MEPs than the EPP. The new make-up of the committee may well impact upon its traditional stance on strengthening labour law and supporting trade unions.

*Sophie Nicolas,
Fleishman-Hillard*



EU, US TWO SIDES OF THE SAME FINANCIAL REGULATORY COIN

by Sharon Bowles, chair

In early September, the European Parliament's economic and monetary affairs (ECON) committee discussed priorities for the 7th legislature. Members were very conscious that many new legislative proposals for financial markets are either in the pipeline or under active consideration, both in the EU and internationally.

With this international dimension in mind, the opening session of the committee's first meeting was dedicated to an exchange of views with a delegation from the markets subcommittee of the US Congress. Conscious that we can play a part in helping to join up the policies agreed at the G20 in our respective legislatures, and avoid regulatory arbitrage, both sides expressed a desire to have a much closer dialogue. There is hope that this can be pursued through transatlantic video links and more visits to compare specific EU and US legislative texts.

Already on the agenda for the committee in the area of financial markets are the Capital Requirements Directive, management of alternative investment funds, the EU supervisory architecture, international accounting standards, implementing regulations for credit rating agencies and Solvency II. Proposals on legal certainty for



IN CRISIS MANAGEMENT MODE TO PREVENT UNEMPLOYMENT DEBACLE

by Pervenche Berès, chair

While the European Parliament's employment and social affairs committee (EMPL) has inherited a certain number of blocked (portability of supplementary pension rights; working time; social services of general interest, or SSGIs) or ongoing files (pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding; working time of persons performing mobile road transport activities), its agenda will undoubtedly be marked by the current crisis.

Even though some people are arguing about exit strategies and the end of the banking crisis, the social repercussions of the turmoil in terms of unemployment and rising poverty are still ahead of us.

As chair of the employment committee, I will do my utmost to ensure that these issues are considered together with other aspects of macro-economic concern, rather than being put to one side and treated as the last item and a mere consequence of other factors. I believe that Europe did not work enough on low-level job creation during the last boom and the years of enthusiasm about new technologies.

If we want the EU's green strategy to be successful and create new jobs, we have to think ahead to shape this strategy and gear it towards the right investments, because boosting employment is not an automatic mechanism.

I will also do my utmost to keep people in work or facilitate their getting back into work. This means MEPs have to be quick to assess requests to mobilise the Globalisation Adjustment Fund, pass reform of the European Social Fund and adopt the European instrument for microfinance, which aims to promote self-employment.

The employment committee will also have to prepare for twin challenges facing our welfare systems: worsening inequality of wealth distribution as a result of the crisis and ageing populations. For that, we need to address the sustainability of public finances and better channel long-term investments.

In this context, drafting the EU's post-Lisbon 2020 strategy presents an opportunity to reflect on reconciliation between the development of atypical work and the respect of workers' rights.

Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Trying to match the achievements of the last legislature

The 6th European Parliament legislature marked important achievements in the fields of environment, public health and food safety, mainly due to the contribution of the Parliament's environment (ENVI) committee, which from both a legislative and institutional perspective has continued to pursue an ambitious and even prolific agenda.

In addition to strong treaty provisions, the assertive personalities in the ENVI committee helped the Parliament to further its influence. Some of these heavyweight politicians left the EU assembly at the 2009 elections. Those remaining, however, will significantly influence the shaping of the policy agenda in the next five years.

ENVI is already positioning itself once again as one of the Parliament's most influential committees, with the potential to further advance the democratic content and accountability of EU policies.

A principal source of the committee's strength is its wide range of policy competences. Few (if any) MEPs would readily countenance a division or reduction in the overall competences of the committee - despite the occasional call to do so from outside Parliament - as this would certainly weaken the EU assembly's powers over environment, health and food law.

First test: The UN climate conference in Copenhagen

Over the years, ENVI has become a powerful voice in shaping EU environmental policies, ranging from air and water quality, waste management and pesticides to chemicals

and climate change.

In particular, the agreement on REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Assessment, and Restriction of Chemicals) in December 2006 ranked among the most controversial issues and most difficult political battles that took place during the last mandate. The Parliament takes pride in having imposed its views on key principles.

The EU's climate change package, adopted in December 2008, is another highly-complex dossier and set out an ambitious agenda for cutting greenhouse gas emissions in Europe.

However, it remains to be seen whether the relatively high turnover of members in the 2009 elections will impact upon forthcoming legislation on issues such as Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) and the recasts of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and Restriction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) Directives.

The Parliament's main priority over the next few months, pushing for an ambitious agreement at the December 2009 Copenhagen climate conference, will prove to be a test of its capacity to act.

The ENVI committee is also well-equipped to use its increased power to scrutinise implementation decisions under the comitology procedure, including measures under the EU emissions trading scheme.

The experience of ENVI chair Jo Leinen, as well as returning MEPs such as Karl-Heinz Florenz (EPP, Germany), Dagmar Roth-

Behrendt (S&D, Germany) and Chris Davies (ALDE, UK) will be important in this regard. Comitology will be an important part of the committee's work during the coming mandate (with literally hundreds of legislative decisions to be scrutinised) and the committee is now starting, probably for the first time, to organise its work in this area systematically.

Continuing to raise the profile of healthcare issues

The 2004-2009 European Parliament brought healthcare to the fore. As well as refining some major (and controversial) legislative proposals, such as legislation on advanced therapies, the outgoing Parliament played a key role in urging the EU to take action on specific diseases in response to the demands of citizens and EU stakeholders.

In doing so, it sought to raise awareness of and take action to combat conditions like cardiovascular diseases (CVD), diabetes, cancer, mental health and, more recently, rare diseases. The ENVI committee played a major role in driving forward these and other disease-related parliamentary initiatives.

Despite the loss of leading figures, some healthcare-driven MEPs have returned and face a busy mandate. Tricky dossiers include the pharmaceutical package, cross-border healthcare and pandemic flu.

Experienced and respected French MEP Françoise Grossetête (EPP) will lead on the cross-border healthcare dossier, and German MEP Dagmar Roth-Behrendt (S&D), now a Parliament vice-president, will also likely

continue her work on healthcare issues, especially the pharmaceutical package.

Christopher Fjellner (EPP, Sweden) is to stay on as rapporteur for Information to Patients (ITP) and Linda McAvan (S&D, UK) will keep the lead on pharmacovigilance.

Also returning are Glenis Willmott (S&D, UK) and Alojz Peterle (EPP, Slovenia), both active on cancer policy, as well as Peter Liese (EPP, Germany) and Miroslav Mikolášik (EPP, Slovakia), both known for their interest in health issues, biotechnology and ethics. Thomas Ulmer (EPP, Germany), Richard Seeber (EPP, Austria), Edite Estrela (S&D, Portugal), Åsa Westlund (S&D, Sweden), Jorgo Chatzimarkakis and Holger Krahmer (both ALDE, Germany), as well as Vittorio Prodi (S&D, Italy), will also serve another term.



WE'LL BE THE VOICE OF AMBITION IN EUROPE TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

by Jo Leinen, chair

Until the end of 2009, the top priority will be the international climate negotiations in Copenhagen.

The European Parliament is a co-legislator when it comes to environmental issues and has already taken important steps when developing the climate and energy package, adopted in April 2009.

Now, the Parliament will be the voice of ambition in the fight against climate change at European, but also at international level.

The chamber's work does not stop there, however. After the negotiations, the EU assembly and its committee for environment, health and food safety (ENVI) will need to ensure that the necessary legislative basis is set up to implement the decisions taken in

Comitology – a key battleground

In addition to ongoing policy dossiers, the ENVI committee will also exercise enhanced parliamentary scrutiny over comitology decisions. Indeed, new committee chair Jo Leinen (S&D, Germany), one of the architects of the new comitology arrangements during his last mandate as chair of the constitutional affairs committee, found himself embroiled in discussions with the Commission about the committee's processing of marketing authorisations for new medicines soon after taking up his new position.

From the farm to the fork: Making food safe

The Regulation on Nutritional and Health Claims was the main legislative act in

Copenhagen and beyond.

Another significant priority before the end of the year is of an institutional nature. The committee will organise hearings with the candidates for the new European Commission and ensure an ambitious agenda with regard to environmental, health and food safety issues.

We need strong commissioners who actively support the fight against climate change.

Health issues are equally high on ENVI's agenda. We are currently working on the so-called pharma package and want to achieve better information for patients, patient mobility and high safety standards for medicines on the European market.

The next major issue for 2010 is halting biodiversity loss. We don't seem to be anywhere near the proclaimed target of 2010. We have to think of completely new ways and means of protecting and fostering biodiversity. One long-term strategic goal is the preparation of the future 7th Environment Action Programme (EAP).

Although the current programme expires in July 2012, it is still completely unclear what kind of a successor it will finally get. We will need strong visions on complex issues such as interaction between the environment, human health and quality of life.

the area of food policy adopted by the Parliament during the 2004-2009 legislature. Implementation of this regulation will continue into the current parliamentary term, with many Commission decisions on health claims expected to pass through parliamentary scrutiny over the coming months and years.

It remains to be seen how much the Parliament will make use of important scrutiny powers, although it is unlikely that all claims will be passed without comment.

Another disputed dossier is food labelling, with a first-reading position still to be adopted by the Parliament.

The returning rapporteur on this file, Renate Sommer (EPP, Germany), will not only take the reins again on food labelling, but she will continue to be a key player on implementing the Regulation on Nutrition and Health Claims.

A centre-right alliance between the EPP, a more economically-liberal ALDE group and the new Conservative group could also have a major impact on the food labelling proposal by supporting a more light-touch piece of legislation.

Other leading MEPs on food safety will also return and promise to play a role in shaping the main dossiers.

Kartika Liotard (GUE/NGL, The Netherlands) was a key player in the last Parliament on novel foods and on ongoing issues at the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA). Frédérique Ries (ALDE, Belgium) was responsible for a report on obesity in the last Parliament and will continue to take an interest in the link between food and health.

British Labour MEPs Linda McAvan and Glenis Willmott also return - the former as coordinator for the S&D Group, and the latter as shadow to Renate Sommer on the food labelling proposal.

Anca Toma,
Burson-Marsteller



Constitutional Affairs

Waiting for Lisbon...

THE EUROPEAN DREAM NEEDS A 'SOUL'

by Carlo Casini, chair

I have always looked at European unity from an idealistic point of view: as an omen for even greater unity between people in the world, where war becomes unthinkable and the motor of history becomes a brotherhood between all nations.

A dream? Certainly, if we look at the present reality. Yet, when I am asked about the usefulness of the European Union, I always answer: 'Can you still fathom a war between the countries of Europe, despite their persistent recourse to fighting each other and perpetrating the most terrible violence during past centuries?'

The fact that today a war is not even conceivable is the most positive outcome of the 'European Union'. But, of course, this answer is not enough.

The Lisbon Treaty consistently repeats that the EU is a journey, a crossing, a reality in motion. It seems to me that the committee on constitutional affairs, placed as it is to write rules and to push for a deeper, broader, more participatory European construction, fits well into my greatest dream.

Rules, treaties, regulations and structures are necessary, but the driving force is all in the 'soul'. I am convinced that it is connected to framing equal dignity for every human being and the consequent rights to which he or she is entitled to.

I will of course work to further implement the EU's technical aspects, but I would not like to forget the urgent need to rediscover the 'soul'. Putting humankind at the centre of the debate, paying particular attention to the weakest and least fortunate, is an essential task for a Europe that wants to regain its soul.

Not only are there bio-ethical issues, but there are also issues of great relevance like immigration, where we need to find ways to harmonise the rigor of the law with our welcoming capacity.

In this challenge, we test European unity, because the borders of Malta, Italy, Greece, Poland are no longer those of individual states but represent Europe's borders.

What a difference five years makes. In June 2004, the newly-elected European Parliament had one major consideration in the field of constitutional affairs – the agreement and ratification of a constitutional treaty. Within a little over twelve months, the constitution had been agreed, ratified by 13 member states, and given the Parliament's seal of approval – but crucially, it had also been rejected in referenda in France and the Netherlands.

As a result, much of the activity on constitutional affairs in the last parliament was focused on the aftermath of these votes, including the 'period of reflection', the Berlin Declaration, the signature of the Lisbon Treaty, and the fallout from the Irish electorate's 'no' vote on the new text.

Many of the challenges facing the constitutional affairs committee (AFCO) in 2009-2014 are predicated on work undertaken in the previous legislature: the Parliament maintains its strong support for the Lisbon Treaty and (if the treaty is ratified) will make its voice heard on the implementation of the text, notably regarding the creation of a European external action service and the designation of the presidents of the Commission and the European Council, and the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy.

AFCO will also aim to ensure the proper respect of the Parliament's prerogatives in the implementation of EU legislation. The work of AFCO – and in particular former MEP Richard Corbett – helped ensure that the Parliament will be able to exercise a veto over most implementation measures under co-decision dossiers (a move that pre-empted the Lisbon Treaty) via the regulatory procedure with scrutiny (RPS).

Working out links with national parliaments

Nevertheless, the new treaty requires a new implementation mechanism, and Parliament will want to ensure that its new-found powers are not eroded. The move of former chair Jo Leinen to head the environment committee (ENVI) will be important in this respect, given Leinen's knowledge of the

relevant procedures and the fact that ENVI is the parliamentary committee responsible for the majority of implementing measures. A range of other issues from the last mandate are also likely to come before the committee: improving cooperation with national parliaments under the Lisbon Treaty, evaluating and improving EU agencies, reviewing the Parliament's membership for the possible accessions of Croatia and Iceland, and regulating the work of interest representatives.

These tasks will take place in a committee that has been shorn of some of its leading lights: Richard Corbett lost his election, leaving a large hole in the Parliament's constitutional expertise; Jo Leinen (S&D, Germany) and Timothy Kirkhope (ECR, UK) have left the committee, and Inigo Mendez de Vigo (EPP, Spain) and Jean-Luc Dehaene (EPP, Belgium) are now only substitutes, although they are likely to remain active on the committee. Enrique Baron Crespo (S&D, Spain) stood down as an MEP. However, the Liberal group remains strong, with Andrew Duff and ALDE leader Guy Verhofstadt on the committee.

Michel Barnier will also be an important player, even if he may be called to serve elsewhere – possibly in the European Commission – during the course of the mandate. The new committee chair, Carlo Casini, is perhaps less interested in the technical details of European integration than the previous chair, but is a traditional, pro-integration Christian democrat.

As before, the committee pitches committed federalists against the most strident critics of the EU. Morten Messerschmidt (EFD, Denmark) is the first vice-president and could therefore be an important player.

Nevertheless, the tripartite pro-European accord between the EPP, Socialists & Democrats and ALDE should mean that the Parliament continues to be a leading voice in pushing for further integration – as well as defending its rights vis-à-vis the other institutions.

David O'Leary,
Burson-Marsteller

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Industry, Research and Energy

Energy security will keep the committee in the spotlight

The rise in energy demand, instability in energy supply (at the frontiers of the European Union), and demands for a revised emissions trading scheme (ETS) and reduced CO₂ emissions took centre stage in the previous legislature as policymakers tried to build a coherent European energy policy.

As a result, the industry, research and energy committee (ITRE) oversaw the adoption of a series of key pieces of legislation that will help define the internal energy market for years to come.

Towards a new low-carbon energy strategy

In the current Parliament, ITRE will play a key role in elaborating a new energy strategy for Europe once the Commission issues its proposals in early 2010 on a policy agenda for post-2030, with a special focus on low-carbon energy technologies.

At the same time, many interested stakeholders will look to the committee to explore the role that nuclear power could play in this new strategy for an adequate energy mix. Other priorities will include energy

labelling for appliances, tyre labelling, a recast directive on the energy performance of buildings and security of gas supply. Although energy is likely to dominate the ITRE committee's agenda, a number of important dossiers from its other areas of responsibility will feature strongly.

With the 7th Research Framework Programme ending in 2013, negotiations on its successor will begin in the first half of the Parliament's term, giving MEPs an important say in the priorities – and ethics – of publicly-funded research in the EU. Energy, nanotechnology and food production could feature quite high on the agenda.

The Parliament will also play a key role in the final adoption of the telecoms package where the privacy issue continues to foment discord with the Council. Its implementation will probably mirror the same debates.

ITRE will also take the lead in the debate over a revised legislative landscape for the information society, including the Action Plan for the 'Internet of Things' and the replacement for the i2010 strategy. Not least, it will be required to give important input into major EU legislation affecting industry, such as the pharmaceutical package.

But perhaps the real challenge for ITRE over the next five years, as for other committees, will lie in effectively exploiting the new scrutiny powers granted to the Parliament under new comitology rules. This will be particularly important with regard to implementation of the ETS Directive and the telecoms package, for example.

Both the EPP and ALDE groups can be expected to have a significant impact on the work of the committee, with influential returning members who know the issues well. For the EPP, both the committee chair, Germany's Herbert Reul, and the former chair, fellow German Angelika Niebler, put that group in a position of strong influence. Better known for her stance on telecoms liberalisation, it remains to be seen how EPP coordinator Pilar del Castillo Vera will impact upon energy policy.

Balancing security and sustainability

Liberal heavyweights such as coordinator Lena Ek (Sweden) and member Jorgo Chatzimarkakis (Germany) will spout the ALDE group's commitment to free and fair competition while supporting binding targets for renewable energy and energy efficiency objectives.

The Green group also has a strong advocate in Luxembourg member Claude Turmes, who can be expected to fight to ensure that energy security concerns do not prevail over sustainability.

Less obvious is the role to be played by the Socialists and Democrats (S&D), despite the presence of two strong vice-chairs, Italian Patrizia Toia and Greek Anni Podimata, and Spanish group coordinator Teresa Riera Madurell.

The S&D group is likely to continue to insist

on safeguarding the public service role in energy policies.

As for the Conservatives and Reformists group (ECR), it remains to be seen if they will be able to maintain a cohesive position on key issues. But UK MEP Giles Chichester, a recognised leader on energy questions, will continue to play an important role over energy policy, due in part to his presidency of the European Energy Forum.

The ECR is likely to support measures to boost growth and competitiveness while rejecting

pan-European projects linked to energy funding and infrastructure investments (such as pipelines).

Although the reform of the financial services sector and the ECON committee may take much of the political and media attention under the new Parliament, the pressing issues of energy security, energy efficiency and climate change remain at the top of the EU's agenda and will keep ITRE in the spotlight.

Elizabeth De Bony & Diederik Peereboom, Burson-Marsteller



FINDING THE RIGHT BALANCE BETWEEN MARKET FREEDOM AND REGULATORY PUSH
by Herbert Reul, chair

A crisis is always an opportunity. This is also true of the current financial crisis. The EU's GDP fell by 2.7% in the first quarter of 2009. Industrial production was hit hardest, dropping by 16%.

However, we have not been passive. We have taken action at European and national level to

fight it. Even though the current crisis is not yet over, the first signs of hope are apparent today. It is important that we continue along the path set by the Lisbon Strategy to make our industry more competitive and to strive towards growth and the creation of jobs.

This, however, means we must also critically look at each dossier and decide what we really need and what should be left to the market. We must thoroughly reflect on finding an equilibrium between market freedom and bureaucratic interference.

Only then will we be able to help our industry embark onto a sustainable growth path. The same is true for administrative burdens. New minimum efficiency standards for products, for example, will have to be verified by public authorities.

With the number of products constantly increasing, new staff will have to be recruited and trained - the administrative burden will significantly increase.

At the same time, we must facilitate and sometimes harmonise authorisation procedures in order not to delay investments. A good example for this is the carbon capture and storage (CCS) legislation adopted last year.

In many areas, we will have to support research and development and the market integration of new products.

E-mobility is just one of many areas in which Europe stands at risk of being surpassed by Asia. The same is true for biochemistry, nanomedicine and space policy. The evaluation of the 7th Framework Programme for Research will be very important in this respect.



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Internal Market & Consumer Protection

Past successes to be continued...

Founded in 2004, the internal market and consumer protection (IMCO) committee endured a difficult first term – despite some impressive outcomes – and is looking to the 2009-14 mandate to consolidate a position as one of the key legislative committees in the European Parliament.

IMCO brought together elements of two separate committees (the old committees on legal affairs and the internal market, and on the environment, public health and consumer policy) with the objective of ensuring a cohesive approach to regulating goods and services – from their production and provision to the protection of those who consume them.

Growing in strength and reputation

This was not an easy task at first: the internal market has traditionally been an issue for the ‘right’, while consumer protection was seen as an issue for the ‘left’. In practice, there was more compromise and cohesiveness than might have been expected.

In addition, the committee’s powers were a little vague, given the overlap of ‘services’ as a whole, with more specific responsibilities for sectoral services (such as financial, transport and postal services) held by other, more established committees. Many disputes came to the fore as the new committee attempted to defend its competences.

Nevertheless, the committee grew in strength and reputation due to its stewardship of the Services Directive (otherwise known as the ‘Bolkestein Directive’), boiling down more than 1500 amendments at first reading to reach a second-reading agreement.

Work on that text, led primarily by German Socialist rapporteur Evelyne Gebhardt and the EPP coordinator, UK MEP Malcolm Harbour, was one of the outstanding achievements of the European Parliament at the time.

That text was perhaps the shining legislative achievement of the committee, but there were a number of other, smaller successes in IMCO’s first five years, such as consumer credit, toy safety, time-sharing, and prohib-

iting a range of unfair commercial practices.

The committee has also been innovative in its work. In collaboration with the industry committee, IMCO took the initiative to hold a parliamentary hearing on the high cost of international roaming on mobile telephone networks. By the end of the mandate, legislation that capped the costs of calls made and received while in other EU member states was on the statute book.

Socialists pass the baton to conservatives

After two Socialist chairs, the committee will be now be led by Malcolm Harbour, an MEP from the European Conservatives & Reformists group. While an undoubted advocate of light-touch regulation, Harbour’s

knowledge and style is well-respected across the committee. His vice-presidents include two continuing members of the committee, Finnish MEP Eija-Riitta Korhola (EPP) and Bernadette Vergnaud (S&D, France).

Many other key players from the previous Parliament remain, including Evelyne Gebhardt (Germany, S&D), who remains Socialist coordinator, and Christel Schaldemose (S&D, Denmark). Barbara Weiler (S&D, Germany), Toine Manders (ALDE, The Netherlands), Kurt Lechner (EPP, Germany), Andreas Schwab (EPP, Germany), former vice-chair Zuzana Roithova (ECR, Czech Republic), Heidi Rühle (Greens/EFA, Germany) and Eva-Britt Svensson (GUE/NGL, Sweden) also return to the committee.

mutual recognition of standards, is still not working properly. The crucial pieces of legislation in the Goods Package address this problem but it’s now our role to ensure that it’s working properly and effectively. We must also promote open and fair bidding for public contracts, giving better value to citizens. Public authorities can also drive new technology through smarter procurement. But, once again, this is not enough; our job isn’t finished.

In an era of globalisation, in which barriers to movement of goods and services are falling, citizens expect their safety and welfare to be ensured. In this way, the internal market and a high level of consumer protection are two sides of the same coin. Creating a single market, in which businesses can more easily sell their products and services and consumers feel confident enough to buy, must be a priority.

Once again though, our job isn’t finished. But then creating a fully functioning single market is not a finite task, but rather a continuous process. The environment in which the single market operates is changing all the time. As old barriers disappear, new ones appear. Therefore, the work of the internal market and consumer protection committee will never stop. In fact, some may say our work has only just begun.

Former chair Arlene McCarthy (S&D, UK) remains as a substitute.

In short, the committee continues to be dominated by a number of former members with experience and knowledge of its operations and the personalities involved in its work.

New working methods... and a closer look at consumer protection

One of IMCO’s main priorities in the 2009-2014 period is likely to be the Consumer Rights Directive. Discussions on this subject began in the last legislature, prompting innovations such as the establishment of a ‘working group’ in charge of framing the position instead of a single rapporteur, and the launch of a stakeholder consultation.

Concluding this dossier is one of the main short-term aims of the committee, but controversy over the use of ‘full harmonisation’ (which may have the effect of diminishing protection in countries with the highest standards) is likely to be a sticking point.

The committee is also likely to continue one of the trends of the previous Parliament by taking a keen interest in implementing EU internal market laws (especially the Services Directive), perhaps even using new veto powers granted to the Parliament under the ‘regulatory procedure with scrutiny’ (RPS) comitology procedure.

It is probable that the committee will take a closer look at some issues that were periodically in the last mandate – such as online gambling, online safety for minors and energy prices.

“Putting consumers, not only markets, at the centre of the agenda”

Finally, competition law and investigations will be another key element of IMCO’s work, with the committee determined to ensure that European Commission decisions on competition cases and sector inquiries take the needs of consumers, and not just the market, into account.

David O’Leary,
Burson-Marsteller



**THE INTERNAL MARKET:
OUR JOB ISN’T FINISHED**
by Malcolm Harbour, chair

What do a French hairdresser, a German IT company, a Polish engineer and an Italian accountant all have in common? The internal market has all given them extensive opportunities to move, practise and establish themselves across borders.

This has not happened organically. It has required extensive work, lengthy deliberation and only became a reality through important pieces of legislation, such as the Services Directive and Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications. However, we cannot afford to stop here; our job isn’t finished.

On goods, we have almost created an economic space for free movement, based on common safety, environmental and labelling standards. But a key enabler,



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Agriculture and Rural Development

A changing climate for farm policy

The CAP Health Check was undoubtedly the most prominent issue on the agriculture and rural development (AGRI) committee's agenda during the European Parliament's last term, but MEPs also dealt with several horizontal dossiers for which the environment committee was 'lead': the Soil Framework Directive, the Nitrates Directive and most importantly the Pesticides Directive.

Following the EU elections in June, the committee has lost several political heavyweights, notably former chairman Neil Parish, EPP President Joseph Daul and CAP Health Check rapporteur and EPP coordinator Lutz Goepel. Thanks to Parish's excellent relations with Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer-Boel, the European Commission responded well to the committee's recommendations on the CAP Health Check during the previous term.

Budget review to impact upon CAP reform

With the Lisbon Treaty, the committee's influence will increase considerably, as the Parliament will hold equal legislative power to the Council on agricultural policy.

Discussions on the Community's financial perspectives post-2013, scheduled to begin before the end of 2009, will greatly influence the preparation of the next major overhaul of the CAP, scheduled for 2013. German and French MEPs may well show a united front on CAP reform, mirroring Franco-German cooperation at ministerial level.

The incoming chairman, Paolo De Castro, is a former Italian socialist minister of agriculture. With a strong background in economics and agronomy, and a plethora of achievements in his home country, he is much respected and should become an influential figure in the committee and the Parliament as a whole. It remains to be seen whether José Bové, a French Green and anti-globalisation activist, known for opposing GMOs, will play a major role.

More generally, political groups will find it hard to remain cohesive in the face of issues that will generate cleavages between 'old' and 'new' member states. This will be evident when the committee discusses the future of the direct aid payment scheme.

New challenges, new practices

Food security and climate change will likely

push the Parliament to make decisions on helping the agricultural sector to adapt to a changing environment. Increasing natural disasters, droughts and floods will undoubtedly prompt the committee to quickly and effectively find sustainable solutions.

In the short term, the crisis in the dairy sector should be the focus of immediate discussions in the committee, as MEPs will examine a Commission proposal aiming to extend the period during which the EU executive supports milk prices by buying surpluses. Following a sharp fall in revenues, farmers have protested against the planned phasing-out of milk quotas in several member states.

Animal testing, GMOs, food labelling and the definition of country of origin will be some of the issues that the committee will have to tackle. The proximity of issues with the environment committee (ENVI) explains why several members of AGRI are substitutes on ENVI.

*Clara Lemaire,
Fleishman-Hillard*



REAPING NEW LISBON PROVISIONS TO GROW NEW CAP

by Paolo De Castro, chair

We are all aware that agriculture plays an important role in the European Union's economic development. The recent turbulence in the market for certain agricultural goods, like dairy products, has shown that we have to continue to reform the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP).

The main challenges facing the European Par-

liament's agriculture and rural development committee (AGRI) for the next five years are reforming the CAP and defining new financial perspectives for 2014/2020.

By then, we should be ready with a project to build the new CAP, which should spell out all the challenges and clarify the policy implications for farmers, certainly, but also for millions of European citizens asking for safe food, a healthy environment and sustainable farming.

Awareness of the extraordinary importance of this work for the European agricultural policy of the future entrusts us as MEPs to do whatever possible to deliver a better strategy which takes advantage of the legislative and financial prerogatives provided by the Lisbon Treaty.

Indeed, once the new treaty has come into force, the European Parliament will share co-

legislating powers with the Council on the CAP. As a consequence, the Parliament's legislative weight will be better recognised, and it will achieve greater democratic legitimacy.

Furthermore the traditional budgetary distinction between compulsory expenditure will disappear, in such a way that on the budgetary level, the Parliament will decide at the same level as the Council.

The new provisions will promote a more incisive role for the Parliament, triggering more and better cooperation between the EU institutions involved in the decision-making process.

For these reasons and conscious of the changes ahead of us, next year the AGRI committee will start to debate the CAP's future and prepare its initial report on the principal features and issues concerning Europe's future agricultural policy.

Civil Liberties, Justice & Home Affairs

Striking a balance between security and freedom

If there is one committee facing substantial changes to its make-up and powers within the European parliamentary structure, it is the civil liberties, justice and home affairs committee (LIBE).

Already the bastion of many politically-sensitive issues ranging from asylum policy and combating discrimination to data protection, this committee will see its role and influence increase significantly once the Lisbon Treaty has been ratified.

At the start of the Parliament's 2004-2009 legislature, the committee made an instant name for itself when it was instrumental in the downfall of Italian Justice and Home Affairs Commissioner-elect Rocco Buttiglione.

From the Hague to Stockholm: Strengthening the EU's role

The committee's main focus during this period was on implementing the guidelines of the Hague Programme (2005-2010), which sets out the EU's strategy for strengthening freedom, security and justice. Reforming polices governing police and customs cooperation, criminal and civil law, asylum, migration and the bloc's external borders was at the forefront of the work of MEPs, who also played a big part in defining the EU's common asylum policy and border control initiatives, including the Visa Information System (VIS).

The increased availability of data brought on by the growth of the Internet, as well as the rise in the use of and access to data for fighting terrorism, allowed the committee to sink its teeth into this area with increased eagerness. It spearheaded calls for stricter rules to safeguard data in Europe, notably around e-privacy, and virulently opposed some provisions of the Data Retention Directive. By heavily criticising the US approach to data retention, the committee helped to force the re-negotiation of transatlantic data transfer and storage agreements.

Between civil liberty crusaders and security champions

Several issues are expected to be carried

through from the previous term. Combating organised crime, human trafficking, sexual abuse and child pornography, developing stricter rules to protect crime victims, and decisions on the final set-up of the Schengen border system are expected to top the agenda.

Along with the review of the Data Protection Directive, the committee will be helping to draw up the successor to the Hague Programme, the so-called Stockholm Programme, which is due to be adopted at the end of 2009 and will comprise new five-year guidelines for the EU's activities in the area of justice and home affairs.

MEPs will be involved in negotiations from the outset, but will also be keen to present their ideas for effective implementation. The challenge will be ensuring that the new programme is finely balanced, taking into account the views of the security-driven right and those of the civil liberty-crusading left. For now, the committee seems to be united in its desire to beef up the responsibilities of Frontex and Europol, the EU's border control and intelligence sharing agencies respectively.

On safeguarding data, members have been pushing for a review of existing rules. With all indications pointing towards a major review of the directive by 2011, the committee will have an important say on how these rules are formulated. Expect fireworks as lobbyists use the committee to wage war on each other. Improving online security and the challenges this brings will also be high on the agenda.

The biggest challenge, however, will come from the Lisbon Treaty. Once ratified, the committee will not only need to re-organise its work and portfolios, but the new treaty will bring the vast majority of EU justice, home affairs and the protection of fundamental rights under the Parliament's control.

It will be responsible for scrutinising measures on EU cooperation on fighting against human and drug trafficking, organised crime and illegal immigration, as

well as on counter-terrorism – by far some of the most polarising topics around.

Majority of MEPs new to the committee

Renewal is one of the major changes compared to last term, as a significant majority of the committee are newcomers. The committee's right-wing members will become more vocal on border and terrorism-related issues, and the natural alliance between the liberals and the left looks set to weaken.

This may hurt discussions on fundamental rights at the expense of stronger security measures. Issues linked to border control, immigration and counter terrorism are also likely to engineer splits along national lines, and the presence of more Central and Eastern European members could help fuel this.

The Liberals are likely to remain kingmakers, but it will be interesting to see how this group's overall shift to the right affects the work of the more left-leaning members of the committee.

The new chairman, Juan Fernando López Aguilar, a freshly-elected Spanish Socialist and a former minister of justice, will have a tough job ahead. Not only does he succeed the very popular Gérard Deprez, but his relative inexperience of the European Parliament may yet show through. Coming from the Canary Islands, he is expected to push the immigration agenda forward.

The committee has never been faced with the prospect of wielding so much power, and yet it may be precisely this factor that determines its success or failure in the coming term.

*Reginald Otten,
Fleishman-Hillard*



VALUES AND THE RULE OF LAW OUR BEST WEAPONS

*by Juan Fernando Lopez Aguilar,
chair, civil liberties, justice and home affairs
committee*

In the global world in which we live, there are two major challenges that easily bring to the surface our societies' inner fears and risk becoming bait for populist measures: immigration flows and the threat of global crime.

These will absorb much of our work in the committee which I have the honour of chairing. The way we tackle them will reflect our capacity to find effective solutions to the problems which upset our citizens while preserving our moral standards and values.

Let me start with migration, a policy area to which I feel very much committed. I come from the Canary Islands, which used to be the stopover for Europeans travelling to the Americas.

During the last decade, though, these waters have become the graveyard of thousands of Africans trying to reach Europe. Fortunately, the story of the Canary Islands' efforts to face this humanitarian challenge is one of success. Part of the credit for this must go to the solidarity built up through EU mechanisms like Frontex, the border control unit. But it is also the result of a strategic policy designed by the Spanish government.

Having said that, only a common European immigration policy can be truly effective. I am particularly worried about unaccompanied minors and about the long-term development of the country-of-origin principle. We have to tend to our needs, but we can't turn our backs on the real victims: human beings trapped in the nets of criminal trafficking on the very doorstep of Europe.

Regarding the fight against crime and terrorism, no other country is better placed to understand the balance between security and individual rights than Spain. As a former minister of justice, I know how thin this line is, but I am also convinced that human dignity, privacy rights and the rule of law remain our best weapons. We cannot sacrifice our values under the pressure of fear.



GENDER EQUALITY TO TACKLE CHALLENGES WE FACE TODAY

*by Eva Britt-Svensson,
chair, women's committee*

It is clear that citizens across Europe want more solidarity, cohesion, women's rights and equality in EU policymaking, because it all boils down to what kind of society we want to live in.

In the European Union today, women's life choices are still being limited by injustices and stereotypes, the division of work between women and men, and lack of access to resources. One in five women in Europe have experienced male violence. If this is not a social and political problem, then I don't know what is. Women bear the bulk of responsibility for care in Europe. Why is this not a top priority for the EU?

Next year it will be 15 years since the UN adopted the Beijing Platform for Action on Women's Rights, and this will also be the moment when we have to define a new EU strategy for women's rights and gender equality. I believe it is time for the EU to develop a strong and concrete strategy following the UN outline.

Women's rights and gender equality are not only legitimate goals in their own right, but are also crucial if we want to address some of the key challenges we are facing in our societies today - how to transform our economies, how to organise care in our societies, how to safeguard the environment and reduce climate change, and how to strengthen democracy and human rights.

For the European Parliament's women's rights and gender equality committee, the



big challenge is to become a space where women and feminists across Europe are able to set the agenda and influence decisions and policymaking in other parliamentary committees, to raise new and important issues, and highlight situations where member states and the EU institutions are simply not doing enough to promote gender equality.

Development

Striving to bring development goals to the fore

In a significant way, the development committee is the 'odd one out' within the European Parliament's committee structure.

Whilst all other committees seek to deliver for the European citizen in their field of expertise, the explicit *raison d'être* of this committee is to serve the interest of poor people outside the EU. This distinction creates unique challenges for the committee, which have been enhanced as a result of the current global financial crisis.

During the 2004-2009 Parliament, the committee was able to establish a financing instrument clearly focused on development cooperation, which replaced the previous overly complex approach.

This legislation, the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI), established principles about the areas where development money could be spent. It has brought a welcome level of clarity to the work of the committee.

A second notable success was the adoption of the EUR 1 billion Food Facility in December 2008, following a sharp spike in world food prices. The fund was established to boost agricultural production and mitigate the impact of high and volatile food prices.

Whilst these were obvious achievements for the committee, it saw less success in the last Parliament in respect of the European Partnership Agreements (EPA). The EPAs were intended as development instruments, but institutional wrangling pushed them into the trade arena, which focused more on EU interests rather than meeting the needs of developing nations. The negotiations around EPAs will continue in the next Parliament and promise to remain contentious.

Giant donor marred by internal wrangling

As the biggest donors of development and humanitarian aid in the world, the EU and its member states carry a substantial responsibility in the global effort to reduce poverty worldwide.

The committee's main test will be whether it succeeds in ensuring that, at a time of crisis-driven financial constraints, its work programme remains focused on humanitarian aid and works steadily towards meeting the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

The case for specific action in the developing world (principally paid for by the developed world) to address climate change will need to come to the fore. However, the distinction between strictly development activities as opposed to climate change mitigation and adaptation projects will create specific challenges.

Skilful political balancing act ahead

Eva Joly, a French Green MEP and new chair of the committee, will need to steer a course which maintains the custom of unanimous voting in the committee while ensuring that these unanimous decisions can then be delivered in plenary.

“Shifting priorities jeopardize the case for poverty alleviation in developing countries”

With a Parliament weighted to the centre-right and a committee more balanced towards the centre-left, it will take considerable skill to secure such an outcome.

A shift in the political focus could mean that the case for development projects and poverty alleviation is likely to be less convincing in winning arguments for action within the Parliament than the EU's self-interest. Debates may revolve around the negative consequences of inaction by member states rather than on the intrinsic righteousness of coming to the aid of the world's poor.

With the growing influence of MEPs from new member states, who have fewer historical links to the southern hemisphere, there is likely to be increased pressure for development attention to be shifted from the south to the east. The development of this change will certainly be worth watching during the parliamentary term.

Tim Nuthall,
Fleishman-Hillard



AN HISTORICAL MANDATE FOR EQUITABLE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT

by Eva Joly, chair

Developing countries are not responsible for the current economic and financial crisis. They have contributed least to climate change and overexploitation of natural resources, but they are currently facing the most severe consequences. The next five years will be absolutely crucial for the world, and they will be vital for developing countries. The mandate of the development committee (DEVE), which I chair, thus has an historical mandate to achieve and we cannot allow ourselves to fail. EU development policy has not been particularly successful during the last fifty years. It has not been able to eradicate poverty and hunger significantly. Some developing countries are even poorer than before. Hopefully, the European Commission's recent communication on policy coherence for development, no matter what its quality or contents, will create the impetus necessary to generate a genuine and frank debate.

Another of our committee's main tasks will be to convince member states that despite the ongoing crisis, they should not only maintain but even increase their contributions to Official Development Assistance (ODA). The objective of devoting 0.56% of GNP to development aid in 2010 has to be a top priority. Strong and efficient institutions are key tools for development. We have to both support developing countries in establishing effective financial and budgetary control services as well as impose international rules to stop illicit and unfair financial flows (money from crime, corruption or artificial transfer pricing by multinationals, etc.), which such damaging losses are. Developing countries would thus master their own resources. They would be able to redistribute fairly the proceeds of their national wealth into social, education and health programmes.

The dramatic situation in the Middle East should also remain one of our main priorities, notably ensuring that international humanitarian law is respected and providing humanitarian aid for Gaza refugees. I am convinced that this five-year mandate is our last chance to prevent us from barbarity. But I am confident that the committee I chair is aware of its huge responsibility.



CLIMBING THE POLITICAL PRIORITIES LADDER

by Brian Simpson, chair

It would appear that at last transport is climbing the political ladder, highlighting how important it has become to the individual citizen.

From the very young to the very old, the need for efficient, sustainable transport is greater now than it has ever been, placing a great responsibility not only on politicians but on the transport and logistics industry at large.

So a key priority has to be to make transport more environmentally sustainable by using both technical innovation and changing mechanisms, particularly the introduction of Eurovignette.

The European Parliament has a view on this and prior to the recent elections had the courage to express support for the principle of charging. The Council, alas, is yet to show similar courage.

Second, there has to be recognition that passengers have rights and that these rights should extend to compensation payments if travel operators fail to deliver, irrespective of the mode of transport.

Third, we have to develop our railways so that they are interoperable and can cross borders without suffering from delays and national bureaucracy (or should I say protectionism).

Fourthly, there is a need to ensure that we have an EU/US Open Skies agreement that is fair to both sides and not weighted, as at present, towards one.

Fifth, we need to prioritise the issue of road safety with concerted action to reduce the death toll on Europe's roads and by having effective cross-border enforcement measures.

Finally, we now need to start the process of planning for transport in Europe for the next 10-15 years so that we can build the infrastructure required and ensure that we can meet the challenges of demand that will continue to increase.

These are the short-term priorities I see the transport committee working on in the coming months, but at the end of the day, our major priority has to be the safe transportation of people and goods across all modes.

Transport

National politics to hinder common EU policy

A common EU transport policy has been a slow work-in-progress. National preferences and marked differences in member-state policy have traditionally created obstacles to the pursuit of an identifiable internal market for transport. The scope for truly ground-breaking progress in the field has been limited.

Work in the previous Parliament on transport policy focused largely on road and air. Both internal market and environmental aspects of transport policy saw noticeable, if not remarkable, progress. The flagship environmental work was perhaps the inclusion of aviation in the EU's emissions trading scheme (ETS). However, the environmental equivalent for the road freight sector (the so-called Eurovignette III proposal) has seen less progress, with the current deadlock in the Council showing little sign of being broken.

In terms of the internal transport market, the agreement reached between the Parliament and the Council on access to the road market was one of the most significant, if tentative, moves towards greater liberalisation of the sector.

Bring ground transport to legislative parity with aviation

The lion's share of the upcoming legislative work of the European Parliament's transport committee (TRAN) should focus on transport modes at ground level. Aviation policy, from an EU legislative perspective, is far ahead of road, rail and maritime both in terms of single market liberalisation and environmental protection.

The challenge for the committee over the next five years will be to achieve some sort of 'legislative parity' between the modes. Only then will the EU's wider goal of 'co-modality' be truly realised.

More widely, the committee and its new chair must address the challenge of

raising transport policy's profile. Much is in TRAN's favour. According to the recent Commission Communication on the Future of Transport, the sector itself accounts for about 7% of European GDP and over 5% of total employment in the EU. Furthermore, European Commission President José Manuel Barroso, in his 'Political Guidelines for the Next Commission', identified logistics as an area where the EU's dominance is a core asset to the economy.

With a new White Paper on Transport Policy expected in 2010, TRAN must make others realise that transport is a (if not the) key ingredient in meeting the EU's major environmental and competitiveness goals. It will be central to debates around climate change and the post-crisis recovery of Europe's industrial base. Not to mention the crucial role it plays in people's everyday lives.

German contingent dwarfs UK representation

It is not hard to argue that the dynamics of the committee will remain consistent with the past. Many of the influential figures from the previous term have remained. TRAN is also blessed with a new chair, Brian Simpson, who has vast experience and knowledge of European transport policy.

Finally, a word must be said on national delegations in the committee. The Spanish delegation is looking strong, with, among others, former Spanish Minister for Public Works Magdalena Alvarez and returning member Inés Ayala Sender among their ranks.

Meanwhile, Germany's 13 full and substitute members of the committee dwarf the UK's representation which, including the chair, numbers but four MEPs. Perhaps certain member states see a future for European transport policy that others do not.

Robert Anger,
Fleishman-Hillard

Regional Development

Helping 217 EU regions to tackle the economic crisis

The European Union's cohesion and regional policy puts into practice the solidarity principle among the bloc's 27 member states in an attempt to minimise economic and social disparities between their 217 regions.

The Treaties entrust the European Parliament with scrutiny powers over the European Commission as regards the implementation of the Structural Funds. Thus, its regional development committee (REGI) plays a key role in controlling the distribution of these funds. The last two enlargements reinforced the objective of reducing the gap. Moreover, the financial and economic crises, which strongly hit the structurally weakest economies, reinforced the need for a "reformed cohesion policy".

Important proposals were introduced at the end of the 6th legislature to respond to the economic crisis. REGI will approve a second Commission legislative proposal to further simplify the rules governing Structural Funds for the period 2007-2013 and speed up project implementation. REGI will also play an important role in debates on the future cohesion policy and the distribution of the cohesion funds after 2013.

Strategy to fight natural disasters

In the last legislature, the Parliament supported the Commission's proposal to modify the Regulation on the European Union Solidarity Fund in order to increase transparency, simplify the rules on mobilising the Fund and widen its scope.

It also requested that the Fund enable the EU to react rapidly to major natural disasters (such as floods, fires, cyclones, earthquakes, etc.) or those caused by human activity (acts of terrorism, threats to public health and industrial disasters). However, the proposal has been kept on hold by the Council. The REGI committee will likely further press the Commission and the Council on this issue.

EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region

The EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region is the first comprehensive strategy covering several Community policies which is targeted at a 'macro-region'. This new strategy will with no doubt influence the future cohesion policy and REGI is expected to draw up a report on the issue.

In the same way, the Commission is currently working on its Danube Strategy and REGI MEPs will have to react to this in the coming

months. The Eastern Partnership launched by the Czech Presidency and the Union for the Mediterranean launched by the French Presidency were the forerunners of this new approach.

Former commissioner to put regions in limelight

The election of former Regional Policy Commissioner Danuta Hübner (Poland, EPP) as committee chair will likely boost the visibility of the various dossiers.

Jan Olbrycht (Poland, EPP), who grabbed headlines by devising the European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC), a tool which helps interregional cooperation, will likely shape the discussion on the future of cohesion policy, pushing for the role of urban areas in regions as chair of the URBAN Intergroup in the Parliament.

Evgeni Kirilov (Bulgaria, S&D) and Lambert van Nistelrooij (The Netherlands, EPP) will both likely flex their muscles during the final stages of amending regulation on the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

*Hervé Devavry,
EurActiv*

Institutionally we are in a phase of renewal. In the coming weeks, we will assess the Commission's evaluation results for the 2000-2006 period with a view to drawing lessons for the future, undertake an in-depth examination of the Commission's recent policy innovations and continue the debate on the post-2013 period.

The possible entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty will strengthen the Parliament's position and increase exponentially our committee's role in the legislative process. We must reform and renew policy agendas.

Whether through smart investment in sustainable new jobs and support for innovation or building new infrastructure, European regional policy will continue to make a difference. As committee chair, I will ensure that the European Parliament plays an important role in making this happen.



TOWARDS GREENER, SUSTAINABLE REGIONS
by Danuta Hübner, chair

In the future, EU regional policy will continue to be relevant to European citizens. The policy's various financial instruments contribute to boosting Europe's economic recovery in line with the renewed Lisbon Agenda, while putting into practice sustainable environmental improvements, ensuring energy efficiency and security and the implementation of the climate change agenda.

Culture and Education

A growing battleground

For years, culture and education policy have been largely overlooked in comparison to some of the more high-profile parliamentary battles that have taken place over environmental policy, economic strategy or the future of Europe's institutions. This may start to change during the coming mandate.

During the last legislature, the European Parliament's culture committee dealt with worthy but frequently dull issues such as Erasmus Mundus, the Bologna Process and student mobility, multilingualism, and the nascent European digital library, 'Europeana'. Few would contest the basic principles of many of the issues discussed.

In reality, cultural policy has always reached much further than these issues. For at least the past decade, several other fundamentally cultural dossiers have also been tackled, but elsewhere: debates about European identity have become embroiled in discussions about enlargement and the Constitutional and Lisbon Treaties.

Similarly, matters such as the future of information and communications technologies and their social impact, the

future of broadcasting and the audiovisual sector, media ownership and regulation of the digital world: all these have tended to be addressed from an essentially economic, rather than cultural, perspective.

We anticipate that this is about to change. Over the coming five years, cultural policy will become much more of a political priority than previously, and in its own right.

Despite the obvious challenges of fast-changing demographic and ethnic structures, perhaps the one issue that will enliven the debate about protecting and nourishing Europe's cultural heritage more than any other is the potential control of the digital cultural world – and Europe's cultural heritage at that – by others.

Over the next five years, it will become more apparent than ever that strong European institutions and policies are an essential prerequisite for safeguarding our continent's cultural heritage.

The digitisation of Europe's written and visual culture will prompt discussions on the functioning of today's global information society and Europe's internal market, more

so than hard economics, monopolisation or copyright violation.

Arguments are already raging over whether the opportunities offered by digitisation are greater than the threats – and about whether all that is needed is proper regulation and monitoring. Some will also argue that Europe's cultural diversity is actually being nurtured by increasing access to literature and learning.

But one thing is certain: the digitisation of literature will propel culture, arguably, to the forefront of political debate.

And this is a debate that will be, inter alia, transatlantic, economic and social in content. It will centre on inequalities of access and the ownership of ideas – and as such will be an explosive concoction pitting individuals, groups and political movements against business models and strategies designed to create wealth by exploiting Europe's cultural heritage.

*Caroline Vrancken,
Burson-Marsteller*



CULTURE AND EDUCATION DELIVER EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP
by Doris Pack, chair

I have always considered throughout my political life that education is crucial to achieving full 'citizenship'. During the new legislative term, the main areas of work to be carried out by the committee include the re-establishment of 'Lifelong Learning' programmes for education (Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo and Grundtvig) as well as the Media, Youth, Culture and 'Europe for citizens' initiatives.

Mobility and multiculturalism should be among the major emphases of European policy, so that the next generation can understand the importance of European integration. The committee will help with the process of establishing a European heritage label that would enhance EU citizens' feeling of belonging to a shared European identity and a common cultural space.

Various issues related to audiovisual media also feature highly on our agenda. Improving copyright protection and online safety for children and promoting our European film heritage are just a few of the key issues. Increasing media literacy is essential for democracy, therefore we will continue to strive to improve people's ability to understand, engage and interact with the media. Dealing with online creative content also tops our agenda as it involves tackling difficult questions related to digital rights management, Community-wide rights licensing and

adequate compensation mechanisms for private copying. We will continue working on an EU Strategy for Youth, calling for a renewed, open method of coordination.

I personally very much like the idea of creating an event that would provide an opportunity and a platform for showcasing Europe's cultural richness and diversity. The European Capital of Culture has been such an endeavour from the very beginning, and the committee will contribute to its further development.

Last but not least, the so-called 'Bologna Process', which should have added real value to the European educational system, is still a work in progress. It was created by the national governments and universities without the involvement of the European Parliament or national parliaments. All actors should work together to make the Bologna Process achieve its goal of establishing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).

MEPs to watch



Joseph Daul
(EPP, France)
Chairman of the EPP group
Former head of the French beef producers' union
Previously chair of the Parliament's agriculture committee, he was elected chair of the EPP group in 2007, replacing German MEP Hans-Gert Pöttering, who was elected as Parliament president.



Jacek Saryusz-Wolski
(EPP, Poland)
Former Minister for European Affairs (91-96; 00-01)
After negotiating Poland's accession to the EU, he was elected as an MEP in 2004 and chaired the foreign affairs committee from 2007 to 2009. During his second mandate, he chairs the delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.



Alejo Vidal-Quadras
(EPP, Spain)
Vice-president of the European Parliament
Research scientist on nuclear and atomic physics
During the previous legislature he was in charge of communications in the Parliament's bureau. He is now responsible for the budget and buildings. As a scientist, he is particularly interested in energy security issues.



Alain Lamassoure
(EPP, France)
Budget committee chair
Former Minister for EU affairs, former Budget Minister
He was a representative of the European Parliament at the European Convention (02-03). He will play a key role in the budget review for the period 2014-2020 which will begin in 2010.



Peter Liese
(EPP, Germany)
Doctor by training
As a doctor, he will deal with public health issues like the H1N1 virus (swine flu) and indirect threats linked to climate change in particular.



Françoise Grossetête
(EPP, France)
Member of the European Parliament since 1994
She will be rapporteur on the Patient Rights Directive, a key piece of pharmaceutical and healthcare legislation, as John Bowis (EPP, UK) has retired.



Martin Schulz
(S&D, Germany)
Chairman of the S&D group
An MEP since 1994
As part of a deal between the S&D and the EPP, he is expected to be elected president of the European Parliament in 2012. Despite the party suffering a heavy defeat in the June elections, Schulz will push to maintain the group's prominence in EU policymaking.



Magdalena Álvarez
(S&D, Spain)
TRAN
Former Spanish Minister of Public Works (04-09)
She will be a shadow rapporteur on the 'Future of Transport in Europe' report. While minister in Spain, she launched the 'Motorways of the Sea' project between Spain and France to move freight off roads.



Ivaïlo Kalfin
(S&D, Bulgaria)
Former Minister of Foreign Affairs (05-09)
He played a key role as Bulgaria's chief negotiator for EU accession. He will be the voice of Central and Eastern Europe in the special committee on the financial and economic crises.



Teresa Riera Madurell
(S&D, Spain)
Former member of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly (00-04)
A university professor, she defended 'Lifelong Learning' during her first mandate (04-09). She now belongs to the delegation for relations with the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.



Linda McAvan
(S&D, United Kingdom)
Member of the temporary committee on climate change in 2008
A British Labour MEP, she is environment committee coordinator for the S&D group.



Rovana Plumb
(S&D, Romania)
Women and children's rights activist and president of the National Consumer Protection Authority (01-04)
She will defend children left behind when their parents migrate abroad for work. In Romania 10% of all schoolchildren have at least one parent away from home.



Guy Verhofstadt
(ALDE, Belgium)
Chairman of the ALDE group
Former Prime Minister (99-08)
Considered 'too federalist' by many, he will continue to put pressure on EU leaders, whom he has repeatedly attacked for failing to agree on a common economic recovery plan.



Silvana Koch-Mehrin
(ALDE, Germany)
Vice-president of the European Parliament
She chairs the gender equality working group in the Parliament, deals with national parliaments (COSAC), and is a member of the working group on information and communication policy.



Wolf Klinz (ALDE, Germany)
Chair of the special committee on the financial and economic crises
Former Vice-president of Euro-chambres (Brussels) (03-04)
The special committee he chairs will focus on discussing possible new structures for financial markets, evaluating the application of relevant Community legislation and the coordination of action by member states.



Carl Haglund
(ALDE, Finland)
Former State Secretary for Culture (08-09)
He is one of the youngest MEPs (30 years old) and belongs to the Swedish minority in Finland. One of his favourite topics is the competitiveness of the EU compared to India or China.



Corinne Lepage
(ALDE, France)
Former Environment Minister (95-97) and presidential candidate in 2002
She backs the establishment of an International Environment Court and a European Environment Court, an idea endorsed by former EP President Hans-Gert Pöttering.



Morten Messerschmidt
(EFD, Denmark)
Former MEP assistant (03-05), MP since 05
Strengthening the EU's external borders is one of his priorities. He wants to reduce the powers of the European Commission and the courts and slash bureaucracy. He is against Turkey's EU membership and wants to give more power to directly elected politicians.



Daniel Cohn-Bendit
(Greens, Germany)
Co-chair of the Greens/EFA group
Well-known as a leader of the student unrest of May 1968
He is one of the most outspoken MEPs. Because of the poor performance of the S&D group, the Greens' natural ally, Cohn-Bendit might try to bond more with the Liberals, and even the EPP, to ensure the uptake of environmentally-friendly positions on key issues.



Sandrine Béliet
(Greens, France)
Specialist on environment law, involved in climate change debate in France
She participated in the "Grenelle de l'environnement", an open multi-party debate in France in October 2007, on governance and ecological democracy issues. She wants to transform the economy by the ecology.



Bas Eickhout
(Greens, The Netherlands)
Worked for the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment
He is a member of a delegation going to Washington at the end of October to prepare for the Copenhagen UN climate change conference and will be shadow rapporteur on the issue.



Michèle Rivasi
(Greens, France)
Former head of Greenpeace France (03-04), Researcher
In 1986 she founded the Commission for Independent Research and Information on Radioactivity following the Chernobyl disaster. She has also worked on nuclear waste and technological risks.



Reinhard Bütikofer
(Greens, Germany)
Former leader of the German Green party (02-08)
He is a strong supporter of the 'Green New Deal', a green plan for tackling climate change and the economic crisis, and moving towards an ecological, social and sustainable Europe.



Isabelle Durant
(Greens, Belgium)
Vice-president of the European Parliament
Former Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Mobility and Transport (93-03)
She will be involved in the Citizens Agora, EMAS and transport issues. She is a member of the working group on information and communication policy.

EurActiv CrossLingual Sections:

Locally relevant coverage and press impact

Editorial packages

EurActiv generally offers policy sections in two versions:

- 1. **EurActiv.com only:** This means in our three core languages of English, French and German. the original text is drafted in English and then translated into French and German wholly or in part. There is no customisation between languages.
- 2. **EurActiv CrossLingual Network:** Here the national partners localise editorial content into their own national contexts in each of 10 languages.

Editorial independence

EurActiv has a strong reputation for fact-based and independent reporting and maintaining its editorial independence[1]. EurActiv covers the opinions of clients and supporters among other stakeholders, and retains final editorial freedom. There is no need for supervision, and EurActiv is able to support a really open debate. In addition to EurActiv journalism:

- Blogactiv.eu can support stakeholder blogging.
- Fondation EurActiv organises Stakeholder Workshops.

Localisation

Once a CrossLingual package has been signed, each of the Network Partners opens a policy section on the agreed common theme. Recent examples include:

- Workers' Mobility in 2006/07
- EU Elections in 2008/09
- Innovation & Creativity started in 2009
- Enterprise & Jobs started in 2009
- Enlargement started in 2009/10

Crosslingual packages contain a mix of top-down and bottom-up initiatives which provides a rich mix of policy angles. Typically, there are agreed monthly themes where all editors agree to publish documents on the same theme. These are often summarised in a 'round-up' article which highlights common trends as well as identifying counter-currents. In addition Network Editors publish policy news which are specific to their countries.

[1] 95% of readers agree that "independent and fact-based media" best describes EurActiv. Source: 2007 EurActiv Readership survey.

Press impact

The EurActiv Network is read directly by over 500,000 users monthly[2]. In many respects this network acts as a press agency. Effectively the EurActiv media network of partner portals are the media multipliers of communication content (articles, press releases, interviews etc). Furthermore, each of the EurActiv media partners in the Network has developed strong collaboration with business organisations, academics and other experts. This increases the relevance and impact of the CrossLingual Sections by bringing the content closer to stakeholders.

Apart from electronic newsletters and RSS feeds in disseminating the content, the media multipliers in each of the targeted countries can use a varied package of interactive communication tools such as: blogs, links to existing relevant blogs, discussion forums etc). These tools provide an efficient platform for interactive communication with relevant stakeholders.

CREATING OR EXPANDING A POLICY SECTION
A) FROM BRUSSELS B) IN 12 CAPITALS



Measuring press impact

An important measure of the credibility of any media is the number of citations it receives from other well respected publications. There is no greater compliment in the world of media than respect from peers. It marks the distinction between leaders and followers. EurActiv - despite its limited resources - is often quoted by large national media. And even more often used as source/inspiration, even when not quoted explicitly by name, the latter being obviously more difficult to track.

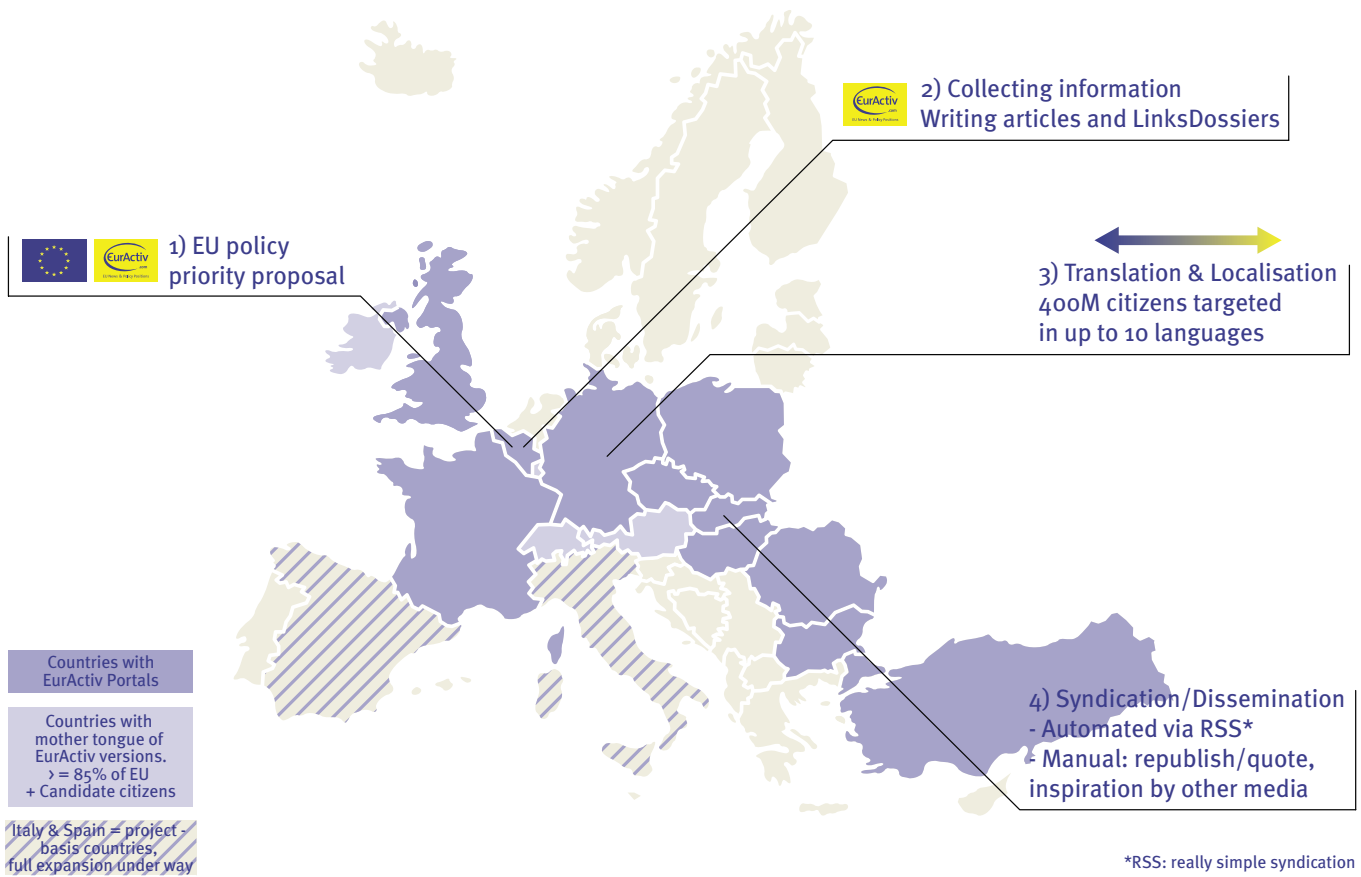
- Sources of feed-back on EurActiv's impact:
- Strong readership statistics by category (leading to conservative estimate of 20 000 journalists reading EurActiv, mostly at national level);
 - Within the Brussels press corps for EurActiv.com, and national press corps for our affiliates, informal soundings attest frequent use by journalists;
 - Several Brussels media rankings and online media statistics (CIM, Google) show EurActiv's leadership among EU specialised media;
 - On a project basis, EurActiv can monitor the press impact more systematically, by topic.[3]

[2] Unique Visitors (counting people only once per month) C.I.M. certified. For further details see: <http://www.euractiv.com/fr/Fixed/about/audience.htm>.

[3] Example: "Enterprise & Jobs" in first five months generated at least 245 external press mentions in 12 countries.

Julian Oliver & Cezara Iacobaiei,
EurActiv

FROM EU TO CITIZENS VIA NATIONAL MULTIPLIERS



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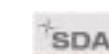
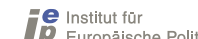
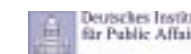
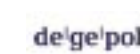
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The EurActiv Brussels Network Office
is located at the heart of Europe

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