

EPHA Member briefing

Overview of European Parliament groups

The newly elected European Parliament numbers 732 representatives from all 25 EU Member States. In the 1999-2004 Parliament there were 7 political groups which are now being revised as a result of the electoral success or failure of certain parties. The overall balance of power in the new Parliament is little changed, with the centre-right European People's Party remaining the largest bloc, followed by the Socialists and the Liberals. Two groups have emerged as larger structures, having attracted members from other political camps. The European Liberal Democrats and Reformers (ELDR) have become Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) and the Europe of Democracies and Diversities (EDD) has become the Independence and Democracy group (ID).

Most of the newly elected MEPs have already aligned themselves with one of the political groups. The remaining MEPs have the status of the "non-attached members". According to the EP's Rules of Procedure political groups in the Parliament require a minimum of 19 MEPs from at least five countries.

1) PPE-DE (Group of the European Peoples Party and European Democrats)

website: <http://www.epp-ed.org/home/en/default.asp>

General characteristics

- 268 MEPs from all 25 Member States
- a **centre-right alliance between European People's Party (EPP)**, composed of pro-European parties such as French and German Christian Democrats **and European Democrats (ED)**, comprising eurosceptics from the UK Conservative Party and Czech Civic Democratic Party.
- the pro-European wing of the group has been somewhat strengthened following the June elections. With 228 MEPs it accounts for 85% of whole group. The number of eurosceptic ED members increased from 37 to 40 but is proportionally slightly lower than in the last Parliament.
- There is a **deep split** between the two parts of the group **with regard to the Constitutional Treaty**, the EPP being one of its main supporters and the ED vigorously opposing its entry into force. Article 5 of Group's Rules of Procedures authorises ED MEPs to express their own opinions on constitutional and institutional issues.
- Priorities of the pro-European wing: free market, federal Europe, Christian values

Praesidium

President: Hans-Gert Pöttering (CDU) - re-elected with 96% of the votes. He is also set to become the EP President in the second half of the 5-year term of office

Vice-Presidents:

- **Joao de Deus Pinheiro (PT)**
 - Ville Itälä (FI)
 - Marianne Thyssen (BL) -> Legal councilor to the Belgian Deputy Minister of Health, substitute member on the Environment Committee in the 1999-2004 Parliament
 - József Szajer (HU)
 - Lorenzo Cesa (IT)
 - Jaime Mayor Oreja (ES)
 - Françoise Grossetete (FR) -> in the 1999-2004 Parliament: Chair of the Working Group on Pain (part of the Health Intergroup), Member of the Environment Committee
 - Timothy Kirkhope (UK)
- Treasurer:** Othmar Karas (A)

EP posts

- **7 Vice-Presidents of the EP**
 - Miroslav Ouzký (CZ) -> Doctor of medicine. Since 1998: Chair of Social Policy and Health Committee of the Czech Parliament
 - Jacek Emil Saryusz-Wolski (PL)
 - Alejo Vidal-Quadras Roca (ES) -> Professor in Physics. Specialised in radiation, environmental radiation and protection from radiation.
 - Antonios Trakatellis (EL) -> Professor in Medicine
 - Edward McMillan-Scott (UK)
 - Ingo Friedrich (DE)
 - Mario Mauro (IT)
- **3 Quaestors**
 - Jim Nicholson (UK)
 - Astrid Lulling (LU)
 - Godelieve Quisthoudt-Rowohl (DE) -> PhD in Chemistry. Scientific Assistant at the University of Medicine (1974-78)
- **9 Committee Chairs**
 - Budgets (BUDG) – Janusz Lewandowski (PL)
 - **Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) – Karl-Heinz Florenz (DE)**
 - Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) – Giles Bryan Chichester (UK) -> Vice-President of Working Group on Complementary and Natural Medicine (part of the EP Health Intergroup) in the 1999-2004 EP
 - Regional Development (REGI) – Gerardo Galeote (ES)
 - Agriculture (AGRI) – Joseph Daul (FR)
 - Legal Affairs (JURI) – Giuseppe Gargani (IT)
 - **Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) – Anna Zaborska (SK)** -> Doctor of medicine. Since 1998: Member of Slovak Parliament; Vice-chair of Committee for Healthcare
 - Foreign Affairs (AFET) – Elmar Brok (DE)
 - Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) – Karl von Wogau (DE)
- **25 Committee Vice-Chairs:**
 - Foreign Affairs (AFET) – Geoffrey van Orden (UK)

- Development (DEVE) – Michael Gahler (DE)
 - International Trade (INTA) – Daniel Varela Suanzes-Carpegna (ES); Peter Stasny (SK)
 - Budgets (BUDG) – Reimer Böge (DE)
 - Budgetary Control (CONT) – Petr Duchon (CZ)
 - Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) – Thomas Mann (DE)
 - Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) – Renato Brunetta (IT)
 - Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) – Charlotte Cederschiöld (SE), Zuzana Roithova (CZ)
 - Transport and Tourism (TRAN) – Luis Queiro (PT)
 - Regional Development (REGI) – Jan Marian Olbrycht (PL)
 - Agriculture (AGRI) – Janusz Czeslaw Wojciechowski (PL)
 - Fisheries (PECH) – Antonio de Poli (IT)
 - Culture and Education (CULT) – Pal Schmitt (HU); Manolis Mavrommatis (EL)
 - Legal Affairs (JURI) – Rainer Wieland (DE)
 - Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) – Stefano Zappala (IT); Patrick Gaubert (FR)
 - Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) – Riccardo Ventre (IT)
 - Petitions Committee (PETT) – Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou (EL)
 - Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee (ECON) - John Purvis (UK); José Manuel García-Margallo y Marfil (ES)
 - Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) - Mihael Brejc (SI)
 - Subcommittee on Human Rights - Charles Tannock (UK)
- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee: **John Bowis** (UK)

Public Health in the programme

The **Priorities of the EPP-ED Group for 2004-2009**¹ emphasise “**the link between a healthy environment and a strong economy**” and opt for “**enhanced contribution of science and technology to sustainable development.**”

The forty-page document includes, among other things, the proposals to:

- intensify and provide adequate funding for **medical research**
- strengthen food quality research
- explore the potential of biotechnology
- better implement and monitor of EU environmental legislation
- create a genuine regime of environmental liability, based on the "polluter pays"-principle
- develop a comprehensive climate change policy
- promote the use of renewable energies
- develop an environment friendly agricultural and fisheries policy

On 13 July, The EPP-ED concluded an Agreement of Understanding with the second largest group in the EP, the PES, on mutual support for the post of President of the EP. According to the agreement, the socialist candidate - a Spaniard **Joseph Borrell** – was elected the EP President for the first half of the 5-year legislative period, whereas the EPP-ED member (probably Hans-Gert Pöttering) will take over during the second two and a half years when the new Constitution will have entered into force.

¹ <http://www.epp-ed.org/Press/pdoc03/priorities2004-2009final-en.doc>

2) PES (Group of the Party of European Socialists)

website: <http://www.socialistgroup.org>

General characteristics

- the **centre-left** group representing moderate social democrat and socialist parties such as the German SPD, the UK Labour Party and the French Socialist Party.
- 200 MEPs from 23 countries
- priorities: to “ensure that employment and social aspects are included in economic policies” and “promote a healthier environment and more sustainable development”

Praesidium

President: Martin Schulz (SPD – Germany) -> member of the EP Disability Intergroup

Vice-Presidents:

- **Magda Kósa-Kovács** (HU) -> active on reproductive health
- **Pasqualina Napoletano** (IT)-> speech therapist
- **Harlem Désir** (FR) -> member of the EP Disability Intergroup, Founding President of the SOS Racisme International Federation (1985-92)
- Bárbara Dührkop Dührkop (ES)
- **Hannes Swoboda** (A) -> In the Vienna Chamber of Labour: economic dept. (finance and env. policy); Director of Dept. for municipal, economic, health and housing policy (1976-96)
- Robert Goebbels (LUX)
- Jan Marinus Wiersma (NL)

Treasurer

Linda McAvan (UK)

EP posts

- **Joseph Borrell** (a new MEP from Spain) was elected the EP President for the first two and a half years.
- **3 Vice-Presidents of the EP**
 - **Dagmar Roth-Behrendt** (DE) -> PES spokesperson for the environment, health policy and consumer protection (since 1989). Chairman of the BSE Committee of Inquiry.
 - António Costa (PT)
 - Pierre Moscovici (FR)
- **2 Quaestors**
 - Mia de Vits (BE)
 - Genowefa Grabowska (PES)
- **7 Committee Chairs**

- Budgetary Control (CONT) – Szabolcs Fazakas (HU)
 - Economic and Monetary Affairs (ECON) – Pervenche Beres (FR)
 - Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) – Ottaviano Del Turco (IT)
 - **Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) – Philip Whitehead (UK)** -> Chair of EP Consumer Policy Intergroup (1994-1999). Member of the EP Disability Intergroup (99-04). Chair of UK Consumers' Association (1990-94).
 - Culture and Education (CULT) – Nikolaos Sifunakis (EL)
 - Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) – **Jo Leinen** (DE) -> Vice-president of the European Environment Agency, Brussels (1979-84). Minister of the Environment, Saarland (1985-94). Vice-president of EUROSOLAR.
 - International Trade (INTA) – Enrique Baron Crespo (ES)
- **19 Committee Vice-Chairs:**
 - Foreign Affairs (AFET) – Toomas Hendrik Ilves (EE)
 - Development (DEVE) – Max van den Berg (NL)
 - Budgets (BUDG) – Ralf Walter (DE)
 - Budgetary Control (CONT) – Herbert Bösch (AT)
 - Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) – **Jan Andersson** (SE) -> Vice-President of the Working Party on Public Health (part of the EP Health Intergroup). Vice-President of the EP Disability Intergroup
 - Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) – Britta Thomsen (DK)
 - Transport and Tourism (TRAN) – Gilles Savary (FR)
 - Regional Development (REGI) – Claudio Fava (IT)
 - Agriculture (AGRI) – Jean-Claude Fruteau (FR)
 - Fisheries (PECH) – Rosa Miguelez Ramos (ES)
 - Legal Affairs (JURI) – Andrzej Jan Szejna (PL); Katalin Levai (HU)
 - Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) – Stavros Lambrinidis (EL)
 - Petitions Committee (PETT) – Michael Cashman (UK); Maria Matsouka (EL)
 - Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) - Edite Estrella (ES); Zita Gurmai (HU)
 - Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE) - Ana Maria Gomes (PT)
 - Subcommittee on Human Rights - **Richard Howitt** (UK) ->Volunteer organiser. In the EP: President of the Disability Intergroup.. Advisory member, World Development Movement.
 - **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee: **Guido Sacconi** (IT)

Public health in the programme

The socialist priority with regard to public health is the **promotion of health equality**.² According to the PSE group “access to healthcare is a basic right for citizens, and it is unacceptable for certain categories of citizens or certain regions to be less well-served than others”.

Socialists and social democrats emphasise that the EU “has a duty to contribute to bringing about a high level of public-health protection through **all** the policies it undertakes”. In addition, they “demand **greater involvement** for the associations representing patients and health professionals, as well as **for the social partners involved and Non-Governmental Organisations**”.

² See: <http://www.socialistgroup.org/gpes/servlet/Main/PoliticalPosition-7? wcs=true&lg=en&mode=detail&id=99>

3) ALDE (Group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe)

website: <http://eld.europarl.eu.int/>

General characteristics

- a new **pro-European centrist** group
- made up of the MEPs of the existing **ELDR group (European Liberal Democrat and Reform Party)**, Italian centrist “Olive Tree” coalition led by Romano Prodi and the French centre-right UDF (Union for French Democracy) led by François Bayrou. The latter two have left the EPP-ED group disappointed with its growing euroscepticism
- so far 88 MEPs from 19 countries -> but hopes to attract more dissatisfied members from other political groups. The largest third force in the history of the EP
- priorities: “fundamental liberal principles of freedom, democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights, free enterprise and equal opportunities”, strong support for the European Constitution

Praesidium:

President: Graham Watson (UK) - reelected

Vice-Presidents:

- Silvana Koch-Mehrin (DE)
- Karin Riis-Jørgensen (DK)
- Marielle de Sarnez (FR)
- Eugenijus Gentvilas (LT)

EP posts

- **2 EP Vice-Presidents:**
 - Luigi Cocilovo (IT)
 - Janusz Onyszkiewicz (PL)
- **3 Committee Chairs**
 - Transport and Tourism (TRAN) – Paolo Costa (IT)
 - Fisheries (PECH) – Philippe Morillon (FR)
 - Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) – Jean-Louis Bourlanges (FR)
- **8 Committee Vice-Chairs:**
 - Foreign Affairs (AFET) – Emma Nicholson (UK)
 - Development (DEVE) – Danute Budreikaite (LT)
 - **Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) – Georgs Andrejevs (LT) ->** Professor of Medicine. President of Latvian Anaesthesiologists Association and Latvian Disaster Medicine Association. Latvian Minister of Foreign Affairs
 - International Trade (INTA) – Jean-Marie Cavada (FR)

- Budgets (BUDG) – Jan Mulder (NL)
 - Regional Development (REGI) – Elspeth Attwooll (UK)
 - Constitutional Affairs (AFCO) – Ignasi Guardans Cambó (ES)
 - Subcommittee on Human Rights - Johan van Hecke (BL)
- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee: **Chris Davies** (UK) – reelected

Public health in the programme

In their 10-point political manifesto **Freeing Europe's Potential: Political Priorities of the ELDR Group in the European Parliament 2004-2009**³ the liberals declare among other things their commitment to:

- “liberalised markets (...) while ensuring **minimum standards for the health and safety of workers**”
- “making Europe the world leader in environmental protection [through] seeking common solutions to our common environmental and **public health** problems”
- “**reforming the Union's Common Agricultural Policy** [in order to promote] rural and ecological heritage and (...) **safe and healthy food**”

4) GREENS/EFA (Group of the Greens/European Free Alliance)

website: <http://www.greens-efa.org>

General characteristics

- an alliance between the Green Group and European Free Alliance (representing stateless nations like Scotland, Wales, Catalunya and the Basque Country)
- 42 MEPs from 12 countries

Praesidium

Co-Presidents: Monica Frassoni, Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Greens)

Vice-Presidents:

Ian Hudghton (Scottish National Party 1st Vice-President and EFA President) and Green MEPs: Pierre Jonckheer (Belgium - Ecolo), Jean Lambert (UK) and Claude Turmes (Luxembourg).

Treasurer: Heide Rühle (German Green)

all, with the exception of Ian Hudghton, reelected and potentially health friendly

EP posts

- **EP Vice-President** – Gerard Onesta (FR)
- **Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights** (DROI) - H el ene Flautre (FR)

³ <http://eld.europarl.eu.int/content/default.asp?pageID=396>

- **Committee Vice-Chairs:**
 - **Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI)** – **Sattu Hassi** (FI) -> former Finnish Minister for Environment and Development Cooperation
 - **Regional Development (REGI)** – Friedrich-Wilhelm Graefe zu Baringdorf (DE)
 - **Culture and Education (CULT)** – Helga Trüpel (DE)
 - **Constitutional Affairs (AFCO)** – Johannes Voggenhuber (AT)
- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee - **Sattu Hassi** (FI)

Public Health in the programme

A Green Contract for Europe 2004-2009⁴ – a list of 44 proposals for the new Parliament – underlines the need to **“protect human health through better protection of the environment”**. More specifically the Greens declare to:

- press for European-wide legislation to protect people from second-hand smoke at the workplace
- continue to fight for a revision of European chemicals legislation
- push for EU legislative action to reduce the generation of waste and for a directive on compostable waste.

5) GUE/NGL (Confederal Group of the European United Left/Nordic Green Left)
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website: <http://www2.europarl.eu.int/gue/showPage.jsp>

General characteristics

- **eurocritical** group representing **far-left and communist parties** such as the Communist Party of France, Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) of Germany and the Nordic Green Left.
- 41 MEPs from 12 countries
- priorities: anti-market and anti-globalisation ideology, secularism, pacifism, workers' and womens' rights

Praesidium

- **President: Francis Wurtz** (FR) – reelected
- **Vice-Chairs:**
 - **Eva-Britt Svensson** (SE) -> Worked on health inequalities between men and women
 - **Miloslav Ransdorf** (CZ)
 - **Ilda Figueiredo** (PT) -> Vice-President of the EP Disability Intergroup in the 1999-2004 EP
 - **Kartika Tamara Liotard** (NL)

⁴ http://greens-efa.org/pdf/documents/GreenContract_EN.pdf

- **Treasurer:** Helmuth Markov (DE)

EP posts

- **EP Vice-President – Sylvia-Ivonne Kaufmann (DE)** -> Vice-Chairwoman of the EP delegation to the Convention on the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU
- Chair of the Development Committee (DEVE) – Luisa Morgantini (IT)
- **Committee Vice-Chairs:**
 - Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL) – Ilda Figueiredo (PT)
 - Industry, Research and Energy (ITRE) – Miloslav Ransdorf (CZ)
 - Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO) – Marco Rizzo (IT)
 - Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) - Eva-Britt Svensson (SE)
- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee - **Jonas Sjöstedt** (SE)

Public Health in the Programme

No political manifesto available but in its 13-point **Motion for Resolution on the Draft Constitutional Treaty**⁵ GUE/NGL emphasises “the principle of gender equality and respect for the rights of people belonging to minority groups”. It also calls “for full recognition of **public services**, which **should be exempted from competition rules**”.

6) UEN (Union for a Europe of Nations Group)

website: <http://www.europarl.eu.int/uen/>

- **eurocritical** group composed of French (RPF), Italian (Alleanza Nazionale-Patto), Irish (Fianna Fáil) and Polish (PiS) members.
- 27 MEPs from 5 countries
- priorities: respect for national sovereignty, Europe of independent nation states, antifederalism.

Praesidium

- **Co-Presidents:**
 - **Brian Crowley** (IE) -> Vice-President of the EP Disability Intergroup
 - **Cristiana Muscardini** (IT) -> Chairman of the European Committee for the Protection of Citizens. Member of the national committee for the prevention of liver disease.
- **Vice-Presidents:**
 - **Mogens N.J. Camre** (DK) -> Chairman of the Folketing Committee on the Environment and Planning
 - Rolandas Pavilionis (LT)
- **Treasurer:** Adam Jerzy Bielan (PL)

5 [http://www2.europarl.eu.int/gue/upload/docs/P5_B\(2003\)0529_EN.pdf](http://www2.europarl.eu.int/gue/upload/docs/P5_B(2003)0529_EN.pdf)

EP posts

- **Chair of the Petitions Committee (PETT)** – Marcin Libicki (PL)
- **Committee Vice-Chairs:**
 - Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee: Guntars Krasts (LV)
 - Subcommittee on Security and Defence (SEDE): Girts Valdis Kristovskis (LV)
- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee - **Adriana Poli Bortone** (IT)

Public health in the programme

No explicit reference to public health. But the 5-point **Political Charter**⁶ mentions the members support for “a Europe of solidarity between all social groupings and all regions in order to bring about equality between people and nations in a Europe which successfully protects the environment [and] protects the towns against overcrowding and urban decline”.

7) ID (Independence and Democracy Group)

website: <http://www.europarl.eu.int/edd/>

General characteristics

- a new **profoundly eurosceptic** group formed by the existing **Europe of Democracies and Diversities group (EED)** of Jens-Peter Bonde, the UK Independence Party, the Sweden's new June List and the Catholic League of Polish Families.
- 37 MEPs from 6 countries --> but hopes to attract more eurosceptic MEPs from EPP-ED.
- priorities: the only common feature – opposition to ratification of the Constitutional Treaty. Possible split in the future – while UKIP advocates UK withdrawal from the EU, other parties want to reform the EU from within by transferring some of EU competencies back to the Member States.

Praesidium

- **Co-Presidents:**
 - Jens-Peter Bonde (DK)
 - Nigel Paul Farage (UK)
- **Vice-Presidents:**
 - **Kathy Sinnott** (IE) -> Disability and family rights campaigner
 - **Hans Blokland** (NL) -> In the Dutch parliament - chairman of the Committee of Inquiry on Waste Disposal (1991-1993)
 - Paul Marie Coûteaux (FR)
 - **Maciej Marian Giertych** (PL) -> Professor in Forestry. Member of the Forestry Council of

⁶ http://www.europarl.eu.int/uen/en/stru/F_grou_en.htm

the Ministry of Environment

- Georgios Karatzaferis (GR)
- Nils Lundgren (SE)
- Vladimir Železný (CZ)

EP posts

Committee Vice-Chairs:

- Budgetary Control (CONT) – Nils Lundgren (SE)
 - **Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) – Hans Blokland (NL)**
 - Transport and Tourism (TRAN) – Sylwester Chruszcz (PL)
 - Fisheries (PECH) – Philippe de Villiers (FR)
- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee - **Hans Blokland (NL)**

Public health in the programme

No political programme available but one of the 15 points of the **Alternative Report: Europe of Democracies**⁷ states that “certain **common minimum standards to protect employees, consumers, health, safety and the environment**” should be the only areas of EU legislation, other than the “rules for the Common Market”.

<h3>8) Non-attached members</h3>

The remaining 29 members will sit as non-attached MEPs. The majority of them represent **far-right parties** including the Flemish Vlaams Blok, Jean-Marie Le Pen's French Front National, Italian Liga Nord, Jörg Haider's Freedom Party in Austria, the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia of ex-prime minister Vladimir Meciar and the Polish Self-Defence Party of Andrzej Lepper.

- **Coordinator** on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee – Irena Belohorska (SK)

⁷ <http://www.groupe-edd.com/index.phtml?aid=11816>