

The European Parliament 2009-14

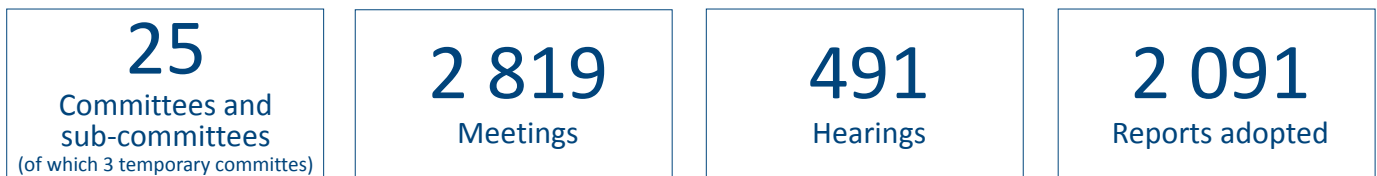
Five years' work in figures



This 'At a glance' infographic aims to give a succinct picture of some of the activities undertaken by the European Parliament over the most recent term, from July 2009 to date.

The Parliament adopts its positions by voting in plenary session on legislative and budgetary texts, as well as on own-initiative reports and other resolutions. EP committees prepare the ground, with detailed consideration of draft legislation and public hearings on key issues. Oral and written questions can be asked to the other institutions. The Parliament also devotes considerable energy to working with Member States' national parliaments, often in joint meetings on specific policies. In the course of the legislative process, representatives of EP committees meet frequently with their counterparts in the Council of Ministers and the European Commission, in so-called 'trilogue' negotiations.

Activity in committees



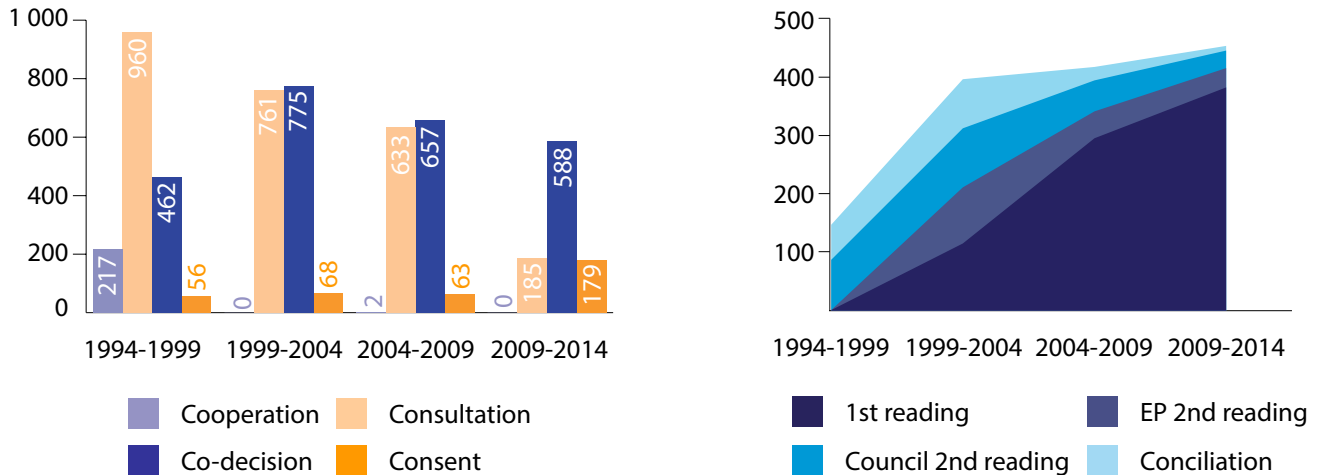
Activity in plenary sessions



Working with partners and citizens



The European Parliament's legislative activity



The most important work of the European Parliament lies in amending and passing EU legislation. Three procedures are used, with the most common now being the ordinary legislative procedure (formerly co-decision). Parliament may also be required to give (or withhold) its consent to certain Council decisions, or may simply be consulted on certain Commission proposals. (A fourth procedure, cooperation, is no longer in use.) The two graphs above together show the rise in the use of co-decision, reflecting greater EP power from successive Treaty changes, and the growing trend for the EP and Council to agree on legislative texts at the first reading of that process.

The bar chart shows all legislative resolutions adopted in plenary by parliamentary term – that is, including all readings for co-decision and the cooperation procedure. The graph shows the stage of the co-decision procedure at which the EP and Council reached agreement on each legislative text.

Annual cost of the EP per inhabitant, compared with some national parliaments



The graphic shows the annual running cost divided by the number of inhabitants for the European Parliament, *Bundestag*, *Assemblée nationale*, House of Commons and US House of Representatives, for the year 2011 (House of Commons, April 2011-March 2012; House of Representatives, October 2010 to September 2011).

Caution is needed in making comparisons, since each parliament has its own history, traditions and organisational set-up: budget allocations for a given purpose in one parliament may have no parallel in another, while very different levels of resources may be dedicated to apparently similar tasks. For example, the EP budget includes the costs of translation and interpreting into and out of 24 languages, and of operating in three centres – Brussels, Strasbourg and Luxembourg.

Figures for the EP and the three member state parliaments are taken from the EP's internal study 'Parliamentary Democracy in Action'. Figures for the House of Representatives are the FY2011 out-turn figures for the US federal 'legislative branch' budget. Since there is no accepted means to divide costs between the House and Senate, the figure used is simply 50% of all items which are not specifically House only. Whilst this does include costs which have no counterpart in the EP – such as the Library of Congress which also acts as national depository library – it can also be argued that the House, with more than four times the number of members of the Senate, should bear a greater than half share of the supporting services. (US\$ to € conversion is calculated at the 2011 rate of 1.3809.)

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