



Deutscher Bundestag

The Committee on European Union Affairs

Ausschuss für die Angelegenheiten
der Europäischen Union
Informationen in englischer Sprache



**New
2023
version**
20th electoral term



“The EU Affairs Committee enjoys particular freedom and autonomy in the priorities it sets. We debate both fundamental issues, such as cohesion in Europe and the European Neighbourhood Policy, and practical matters, such as EU enlargement or action to strengthen democracy. We engage closely with the Federal Government, the European Parliament and the Commission on these topics.”



Dr Anton Hofreiter,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Chairman of the Committee on
European Union Affairs

The German Bundestag's decisions are prepared by its committees, which are established at the start of each electoral term. Four of them are stipulated by the Basic Law, the German constitution: the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the Defence Committee, the Committee on European Union Affairs and the Petitions Committee.

The Budget Committee and the Committee for the Scrutiny of Elections, Immunity and the Rules of Procedure are also required by law. The spheres of responsibility of the committees essentially reflect the Federal Government's distribution of ministerial portfolios. This enables Parliament to scrutinise the government's work effectively.

The committees of the German Bundestag

The German Bundestag sets political priorities of its own by establishing additional committees for specific subjects, such as sport, cultural affairs, human rights or tourism. In addition, special bodies such as parliamentary advisory councils, committees of inquiry or study commissions can also be established. The committees are composed of members of all the parliamentary groups, reflecting the balance of these groups in the German Bundestag. The distribution of the chairs and deputy chairs among the parliamentary groups also reflects their relative strengths in the plenary. In the current electoral term, the committees have between 19 and 49 members.

The committees discuss and deliberate on items referred to them by the plenary. They also have the right to take up issues on their own initiative, allowing them to set priorities in the parliamentary debate. When necessary, they draw on external expertise – usually by holding public hearings. At the end of a committee's deliberations – especially on bills and motions for which it is the lead committee – it adopts a recommendation for a decision and a report, which serve as the basis for the plenary's decision.

The Committee on EU Affairs is mentioned in Article 45 of the Basic Law, Germany's constitution, and must be established in every electoral term. It prepares decisions to be taken by the plenary on the items of business referred to it, and takes up European policy issues on its own initiative. The Committee is responsible for all fundamental issues relating to European integration: institutional reforms, changes to EU treaties, strategies on individual policy areas, EU enlargement, and the Multiannual Financial Framework. The EU Affairs Committee is thus the central forum for parliamentary consideration of European policy issues. It is an advocate for joint European answers in areas where this is appropriate and useful, asserts Germany's interests, and champions a less bureaucratic Europe which is close to people's lives.

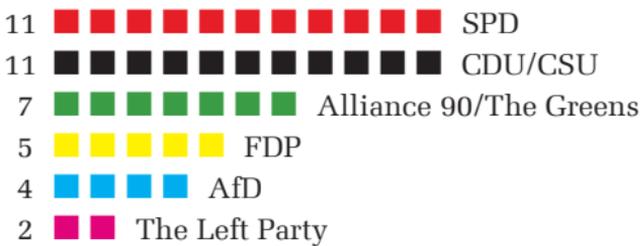
The Committee on European Union Affairs

Composition and parliamentary participation in EU affairs

The EU Affairs Committee is composed of 40 Members of the Bundestag and 19 Members of the European Parliament elected in Germany who are appointed to the Committee and have the right to participate in the Committee's work, but are not entitled to vote. This approach ensures close links between the Bundestag and the European Parliament.

The Bundestag's participation in matters concerning the EU stretches from the right to deliver opinions to constitutive consent in the form of a

law. In this context, it is essential for Parliament to be notified in full at an early stage about all EU initiatives. Although the Bundestag's involvement in EU affairs is a matter for Parliament as a whole, the EU Affairs Committee, as an integrative cross-cutting committee, has a special responsibility for participation in and scrutiny of European policy-making. It oversees the implementation and design of Parliament's rights to receive information and participatory rights, and examines whether proposed European legislation is compatible with the principles of subsidiarity and proportionality. In certain circumstances, it can take decisions on behalf of the plenary or table amendments to recommendations for a decision submitted by other committees.



Number of members: 40

Chairman: Dr Anton Hofreiter, Alliance 90/The Greens

Deputy Chairman: Markus Töns, SPD

The EU Affairs Committee's key topics

The EU received a substantial temporary increase in its financial resources in response to the recession caused by the coronavirus pandemic, with the aim of boosting the EU's stability and resilience and making the economy more digital, sustainable and climate-friendly. Europe is also intended to become more capable of action and strategically sovereign. All of this is reflected in the Committee's deliberations: the European Green Deal, the strategic direction of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, the transatlantic and the Indo-Pacific relationships, the deepening and strengthening of the Economic and Monetary Union, and the European Semester for enhanced coordination of economic policies.

The subjects covered at the Committee's meetings, which are held in the Paul Löbe Building's Europasaal, reflect the European agenda. When necessary, the Committee travels to Brussels for talks, or invites discussion partners from Brussels to join its meetings. It has close links with stakeholders at European level and the European affairs committees established by the national parliaments of the EU Member States and the candidate countries.



The foreign policy issues examined by the Committee include EU enlargement, the European Neighbourhood Policy, and regional cooperation and strategies. The Committee regularly analyses the European Commission's reports on the reform efforts of the candidate countries and the accession negotiations. A closely associated issue is the rule of law – a growing priority in the Committee's work, and not only in its contacts with the candidate countries – and the Committee's consideration of the reports on developments in the Member States and instruments to effectively enforce uniform standards.

The Committee was closely involved in the Conference on the Future of Europe, and it will continue to follow up on the recommendations which emerged from the dialogue between citizens, EU institutions, Members of the national parliaments and civil-society stakeholders.



The Committee's work in practice

The Committee follows the meetings of the Council in its various configurations, the Eurogroup and the European Council, and requests written reports on these meetings from the Federal Government, as well as oral reports when necessary. In order to hear different perspectives on the subjects for which it is responsible, the Committee invites representatives of the European institutions, the Member States and the candidate countries to its meetings, and occasionally sends delegations to other countries so

that its members can form their own impression of reform processes, for example, and ask questions in talks with civil society representatives or journalists. The Committee makes use of the option of holding public hearings with experts to discuss legal and specialised issues in greater depth. The findings feed into the Committee's opinions and recommendations for a decision.



The EU Affairs Committee maintains contacts with parliamentarians from the EU Member States and sends delegations to the twice-yearly plenary meetings of the Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs (COSAC). Alongside topical European policy issues, the priorities of the rotating Presidency of the Council are the focus of the deliberations. Increasingly, COSAC is making use of video conferences to intensify its dialogue. There are several national parliaments with which the EU Affairs Committee has an especially close working relationship. The Franco-German Parliamentary Agreement allows the members of the EU

affairs committees of the Bundestag and the French Assemblée nationale to attend each other's meetings without having the right to vote; joint deliberations take place on selected topics. Trilateral meetings are held with the EU affairs committees of the French and Polish parliaments, in what is known as the Weimar Triangle format, and with the EU affairs committees of the French and Italian parliaments, in what is known as the Montecitorio format.



Dr Anton Hofreiter,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Chairman
Biologist,
b. 2 Feb. 1970
in Munich.
Bundestag Member
since 2005



Markus Töns,
SPD
Deputy Chairman
Political scientist,
b. 1 Jan. 1964
in Gelsenkirchen.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Committee members

The 40 members of the Committee on
European Union Affairs

Christian Petry,
SPD
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Public administration
specialist, senior
officer in the public
administration,
b. 15 Mar. 1965 in
Neunkirchen, Saarland.
Bundestag Member
since 2014



Detlef Seif,
CDU/CSU
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Lawyer,
b. 15 Aug. 1962
in Euskirchen.
Bundestag Member
since 2009



Michael Sacher,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Bookseller,
b. 1 Sep. 1964
in Dortmund.
Bundestag Member
since 2022



Thomas Hacker,
FDP
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Business administrator,
b. 9 Oct. 1967
in Bayreuth.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Jochen Haug,
AfD
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Lawyer,
b. 11 Jan. 1973
in Aulendorf.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Alexander Ulrich,
The Left Party
Parliamentary-group
coordinator
Trade union secretary,
b. 11 Feb. 1971
in Kusel.
Bundestag Member
since 2005



Dagmar Andres,
SPD
Tax clerk, accountant,
business administrator
specialising in tax,
b. 3 Dec. 1969
in Cologne.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Nezahat Baradari,
SPD
Paediatrician,
b. 15 Aug. 1965
in Ankara (Turkey).
Bundestag Member
since 2019



Fabian Funke,
SPD
International relations
specialist,
b. 25 July 1997
in Dresden.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Angelika Glöckner,
SPD
Office communications
clerk, public
administration
specialist, business
administrator,
b. 5 Feb. 1962
in Pirmasens.
Bundestag Member
since 2014



Josip Juratovic,
SPD
Car mechanic,
b. 15 Jan. 1959
in Koprivnica (Croatia).
Bundestag Member
since 2005



Jörg Nürnberger,
SPD
Lawyer,
b. 17 Apr. 1967
in Wunsiedel.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Axel Schäfer,
SPD
Former
secretary-general,
b. 3 Aug. 1952
in Frankfurt am Main.
Bundestag Member
since 2002



Johannes Schraps,
SPD
Political scientist,
b. 17 Aug. 1983
in Bad Pyrmont.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Claudia Tausend,
SPD
Geographer,
b. 22 July 1964
in Vilsbiburg.
Bundestag Member
since 2013



Ralph Brinkhaus,
CDU/CSU
Tax adviser,
b. 15 June 1968
in Wiedenbrück.
Bundestag Member
since 2009



Yannick Bury,
CDU/CSU
Economist,
b. 11 Mar. 1990
in Herbolzheim.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Dr Otilie Klein,
CDU/CSU
Department head,
b. 14 Feb. 1984
in Villingen-
Schwenningen.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Gunther Krichbaum,
CDU/CSU
policy spokesman
Business lawyer,
b. 4 May 1964
in Korntal.
Bundestag Member
since 2002



Tilman Kuban,
CDU/CSU
Corporate lawyer,
b. 26 May 1987
in Langenhagen.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Dr Christoph Ploß,
CDU/CSU
Historian,
b. 19 July 1985
in Hamburg.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Alexander Radwan,
CDU/CSU
Lawyer,
b. 30 Aug. 1964
in Munich.
Bundestag Member
since 2013



Catarina
dos Santos Firnhaber,
CDU/CSU
Lawyer,
b. 8 July 1994
in Lisbon (Portugal).
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Andreas Scheuer,
CDU/CSU
Former
Federal Minister,
b. 26 Sep. 1974
in Passau.
Bundestag Member
since 2002



Tobias Winkler,
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Office manager,
b. 16 Jan. 1978
in Nuremberg.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Sabine Grützmacher,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Youth and
community worker,
b. 4 Jan. 1986
in Waldbröl.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Chantal Kopf,
Alliance 90/The Greens
policy spokeswoman
Political scientist,
b. 20 Mar. 1995
in Baden-Baden.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Boris Mijatović,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Employee,
b. 4 Feb. 1974
in Kassel.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Julian Pahlke,
Alliance 90/The Greens
Employee,
b. 15 Oct. 1991
in Gehrden.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Robin Wagener,
Alliance 90/The Greens
policy spokesman
Judge,
b. 16 Aug. 1980
in Bielefeld.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Katja Adler,
FDP
Civil servant,
b. 20 May 1974
in Eisenhüttenstadt.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Dr Ann-Veruschka
Jurisch,
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Lawyer,
b. 10 Jan. 1972
in Cologne.
Bundestag Member
since 2021



Michael Georg Link,
FDP
policy spokesman
Former Minister
of State,
b. 6 Feb. 1963
in Heilbronn.
Bundestag Member
from 2005 to 2013 and
since 2017



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FDP
Market researcher,
b. 3 May 1977
in Heidelberg
Bundestag Member
since 2009



Norbert Kleinwächter,
AfD
Teacher,
b. 22 Feb. 1986
in Augsburg.
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Dr Rainer Rothfuß,
AfD
Geopolitical Analyst,
b. 19 Apr. 1971 in
Freudenstadt.
Bundestag Member
since 2023



Professor Harald Weyel,
AfD
policy spokesman
Professor of business
administration,
b. 30 Aug. 1959
in Herborn (Dillkreis).
Bundestag Member
since 2017



Andrej Hunko,
The Left Party
policy spokesman
Media designer,
b. 29 Sep. 1963
in Munich.
Bundestag Member
since 2009



Information online

The Conference of Parliamentary Committees
for Union Affairs (COSAC)

<https://secure.ipex.eu/IPEXL-WEB/conferences/cosac/home>



The European Parliament
www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/en



The European Council
www.consilium.europa.eu/en/european-council



The Council of the European Union
www.consilium.europa.eu/en/council-eu



The European Commission
http://ec.europa.eu/index_en.htm



Website for downloading and ordering the German Bundestag's
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www.btg-bestellservice.de



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The Committee on European Union Affairs
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The German Bundestag takes decisions on what are at times highly complex and controversial bills and parliamentary initiatives relating to the entire spectrum of policy fields. The committees play a central role in parliamentary deliberations. They are the forum where the Members thrash out compromises and draw on expert advice before submitting their reports and recommendations for decisions to be voted on by the Bundestag as a whole.

www.bundestag.de/en/committees



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