

# EuroWire

Capitol Hill's Connection to Brussels



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**EuroWire** is a joint publication of the Bertelsmann Foundation offices in Washington, DC and Brussels. It connects Capitol Hill to European Union policy and politics and contributes to a common trans-Atlantic political culture. EuroWire is an occasional publication that highlights issues, legislation and policymakers relevant to the Congressional legislative cycle. This publication looks at the European Union from the point of view of Capitol Hill staffers and offers timely operational analysis.

## The New European Parliament: Ten to Watch

### KEY POINTS

- The European Parliamentary elections, the largest democratic election in the Western world, saw a **shift to the right and a rise in Euro-skepticism**.
- Turnout for the 2009 European Parliament vote was **43%**, the lowest since such elections began in 1978. Turnout in the 2006 US midterm election was **37.1%**.
- Key issues on the European Parliament's radar that could have implications for US legislation include: **climate change, energy security, financial regulation, migration and social integration, and international trade**.

The European Parliament's (EP) elections in July were the largest ever in the Western world, with 375 million eligible voters. The new EP convened in September and lost little time in beginning to tackle the first items on its agenda, including the appointment of committee chairs and the re-election of European Commission President José Manuel Barroso.

Critics often dismiss the EP as a kind of political purgatory – a place to put out to pasture retired politicians and those marred in political scandal at home. Yet for all of its shortcomings, the EP continues to expand its power regionally and globally. And a recent Gallup poll showed that the EP is among Europe's most trusted institutions.

In reality, the EP is increasingly becoming a repository of rising political stars and leaders-in-waiting. Political power in Europe continues to gravitate toward Brussels and, in particular, toward the EP. For many, the Brussels phase of their political careers is a chance to gain international gravitas and familiarity with navigating the EU's institutions, which today are responsible for approximately 80 percent of the legislation that governs member-states.

The 2009 parliamentary elections saw the lowest turnout since pan-European elections began in 1979 and the rise

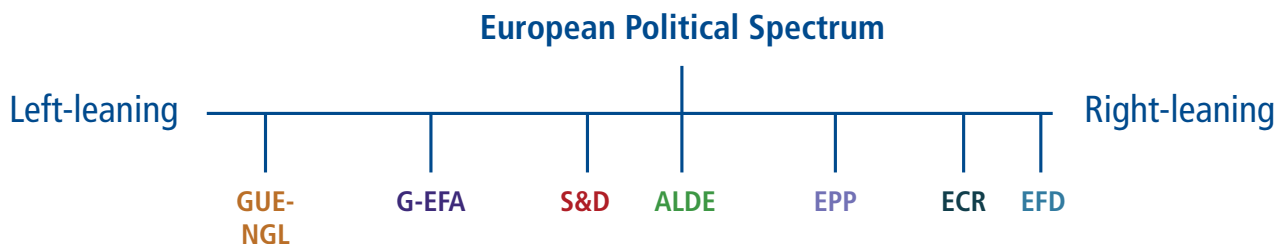
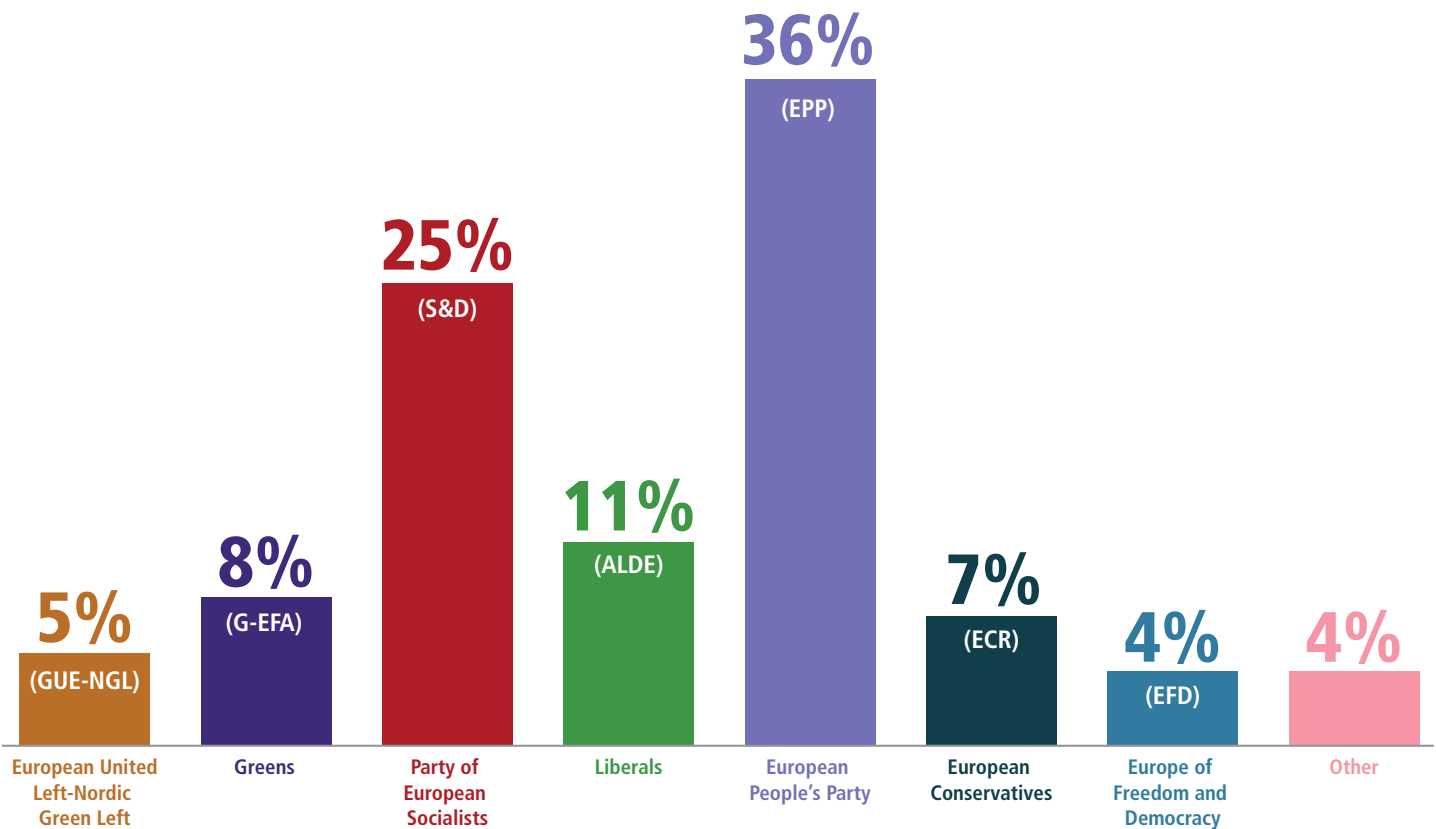
**ABOUT THE BERTELSMANN FOUNDATION:** The Bertelsmann Foundation is a private, nonpartisan operating foundation, working to promote and strengthen trans-Atlantic cooperation. Serving as a platform for open dialogue among key stakeholders, the Foundation develops practical policy recommendations on issues central to successful development of both sides of the ocean.

of several new parties, particularly on the far right, in several member-states. It also saw the withdrawal of British Conservatives (as well as leading conservative parties from Poland and the Czech Republic) from the center-right European People's Party (EPP). These conservative parties have formed a new Euro-skeptic political grouping – Europe of Freedom and Democracy (EFD).

players that members of Congress and their staffs should know and have on their radars. These are the established titans and rising stars of Brussels who understand the EU's levers of power, particularly as it relates to upcoming issues on Congress' agenda.

As Brussels sorts out the results of the EP elections and its meaning for Europe's future, the **Bertelsmann Foundation** has assembled a brief guide to the ten power

## Composition of the New European Parliament



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# Power Player Profiles



## Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament (Poland, EPP)

On [June 14](#), Buzek was elected President of the European Parliament, that body's leading figure. His election is a milestone: He is the [first national of a central/eastern European country](#) to hold the position. Buzek has been an EP member since Poland joined the EU in 2004. Described as the ["Polish Phoenix"](#), Buzek rose from obscurity to serve as Polish Prime Minister from 1997 to 2001. During that time, he pushed an ambitious economic-

reform agenda. In his [inaugural speech](#), Buzek cited human rights as a priority for

his tenure. He recently spoke out against the murder of Russian human-rights activist [Andrei Kulagin](#). Buzek has also promised to make the [Eastern Partnership](#) a top priority. The Eastern Partnership fosters increased political and economic cooperation between the EU and its immediate Eastern neighbors such as Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

**Issues:** Eastern Europe (Ukraine, Georgia), Human Rights.

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## Gabriele Albertini, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee (Italy, EPP)

A center-right former mayor of Milan, Albertini is closely associated with small business and is seen as a surprise choice for the coveted chairmanship of the Foreign Affairs Committee. His extensive career was based mainly in the private sector before he was elected mayor of Italy's economic hub. His past exposure to foreign policy in the parliament has come primarily through his caucus memberships. He is a [member](#) of the

NATO parliamentary group, the EU-US Delegation and the Delegation for relations with Israel. His committee is already scheduled to look

at the EU's relationship with [central Asia](#). In particular, the EU is looking to increase ties with [Tajikistan](#), a country of great strategic importance due to its border with Afghanistan.

**Issues:** Foreign and Security Policy, the Middle East and the Mediterranean, Central Asia and AfPak, the Eastern Partnership

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## Vital Moreira, Chairman of the International Trade Committee (Portugal, S&D)

Portuguese left-of-center politician Vital Moreira has been elected to head the Committee on International Trade, which touches on one of the EU's most powerful functions. The committee is responsible for oversight of the EU's relations with the WTO, trade agreements and elements of regulatory barriers to trade.

This autumn the committee is [set](#) to look into the EU-China trade relationship and the impact of the economic crisis on trade.

Moreira's appointment was [not initially foreseen](#). Although he was the top center-left Portuguese candidate for the EP, he is new to the parliament and has a professional background primarily in constitutional and human-rights law. Moreira is a frequent [author and blogger](#).

**Issues:** WTO, Trade Agreements, Trade Barriers

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## Elmar Brok, Chairman, Delegation for Relations with the United States (Germany, EPP)

Well known EP veteran and long-time committed Atlanticist Elmar Brok has been tapped to head the EU-US Delegation and will continue to serve as foreign-policy spokesman for the center-right EPP. His expertise on trans-Atlantic issues from [foreign and security policy](#) to economic policy is matched only by the depth of his US political network, a product of decades of relationship building in Washington.

Brok has been a leading political figure on other trans-Atlantic foreign- and security-policy issues. He was critical of Sweden's decision to send its ambassador to [Iranian](#) President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's second inauguration. (Sweden holds the current EU presidency.) He stated that Stockholm unduly lent legitimacy to an election that the EU characterized as irregular. Most recently, he has been outspoken in his calls for a credible exit strategy with a [fixed timetable](#) for German withdrawal from Afghanistan. He has stated that five years would be too long.

The former chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee (1999-2007), Brok is a strong proponent of deeper EU-US relations and has championed the [Transatlantic Economic Council \(TEC\)](#) as the bridge for building stronger Congressional ties to the EU. He was one of the political drivers behind rehabilitating the trans-Atlantic relationship in 2006, after the diplomatic estrangement in the run-up to the Iraq war.

**Issues:** Trans-Atlantic Relations (political and economic), Iran, Middle East Peace, Defense, NATO

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## Sharon Bowles, Chairwoman of the Economics and Monetary Affairs Committee (UK, ALDE)

First elected in 2005, Sharon Bowles, a Liberal from the UK, has been chosen to head the powerful Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, which works closely with the European Central Bank and Europe's financial regulators. Her committee is also responsible for oversight of new EU financial regulation including competition rules and regulation on the movement of capital.

important counterpart for members of the House Finance Committee and the Senate Banking Committee.

Bowles is a Liberal from a [non-Euro member-state](#) (the UK) that has an interest in maintaining lighter regulation of the financial sector than some continental member-states would prefer. She is backed so strongly by the City of London that some in the French government, which strongly favors more strident hedge-fund regulation, considered [blocking](#) her nomination.

A patent attorney by trade, she has spent her professional life working on [IPR protection](#) for cutting-edge technologies and originally vied for a top post on the Trade Committee. Bowles has worked extensively on Europe's [Capital Requirements Directive](#), Europe's answer to the compliance requirements coming out of Basel II. She has also worked on Solvency II, which aims to create a single EU insurance-services market.

**Issues:** Financial Regulation, Hedge-fund and Private-equity Regulation, Capital Requirements, Deposit Insurance, IPR

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Bowles is seen as more technical and less sweeping in her approach to legislation than her French predecessor. In the upcoming legislative period, her committee is responsible for [new hedge-fund and private-equity regulation](#) that could have important implications for US financial regulation. She has already made clear that she will consult with representatives of non-EU countries with a strong interest in [global financial regulations](#), particularly members of the US Congress. During early debates on new EU guidelines for hedge funds and private equity, she raised [concerns](#) that the guidelines contain protectionist elements that could complicate financial transactions involving non-EU states, such as the US. She will be an



### **Arnaud Danjean, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Security and Defense (France, EPP)**

Danjean, a member of Sarkozy's center-right party in France, was first elected in 2009 and is already slated to chair the Subcommittee on Security and Defense for the Foreign Affairs Committee. This subcommittee has recently focused on NPT and WMD concerns. While the subcommittee remains limited in its purview, its role could increase in light of the [Lisbon Treaty's](#) aim to enhance the EU's role in foreign and security policy, and new NATO Secretary-

In his mid-thirties, Danjean is a former [French defense-ministry official](#) with a long record of experience in the Balkans. He covered the region for the French government from 1994 to 2007. He served as a political officer at the French embassy in Sarajevo (1995-1998) and during the Kosovo crisis headed the Balkan department at the French Ministry of Defense. After a three-year assignment to the French mission to the UN in Geneva, he held the position of adviser on the Balkans to French Foreign Ministers Michel Barnier (2005) and Philippe Douste-Blazy 2005-2007.

General Anders Fogh Rasmussen's stated priority to remove the barriers to a [NATO-EU strategic partnership](#). Danjean's subcommittee's work tracks closely with that of the House and Senate Subcommittee on Europe and that of Congressional members in the [NATO Parliamentary Assembly](#).

**Issues:** Defense, Balkans, NATO, European Defense, WMD, NPT  
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### **Wolf Klinz, Chairman of the Temporary Committee on the Economic Crisis (Germany, ALDE)**

German Liberal Wolf Klinz has been tapped for the plum position of head of the EP's Temporary Committee on the Economic Crisis, tasked with identifying the causes of the crisis. Klinz will work closely with the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of Sharon Bowles, with whom he has a longstanding and close working relationship. Like Bowles, he has expressed a desire to avoid rules that would create a ["Fortress Europe"](#) in finance.

The former [McKinsey executive](#) has close ties to business, having spent a number of years as president of the Industrial Chamber of Commerce in Frankfurt and in top positions at the European Chamber of Commerce. Klinz has a [long history of work](#) on banking, ratings-agency, and financial-services regulation at the European level. The Liberal [spokesman](#) on economic issues, Klinz is a [tax hawk](#) and has expressed weariness of public-stimulus packages that could ultimately lead to higher taxes in European member-states.

The liberal tandem of Klinz and Bowles will be responsible for the parliamentary response to post-crisis financial regulation and oversight.

**Issues:** Economic and Financial Crisis, Financial Regulatory Oversight  
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### **Juan Fernando López Aguilar, Chairman of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (Spain, S&D)**

This former Spanish Minister of Justice has assumed the chairmanship of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs.

Born in Las Palmas in the Canary Islands and elected as socialist candidate for the presidency of the Canary Islands government in 2006, Aguilar is well-versed in the issue of refugees. He is an ardent advocate for a comprehensive EU immigration policy and

The politician, [musician](#) and [caricaturist](#) has [emphasized](#) the importance of multilateral cooperation, especially in the areas of human trafficking, international crime, corruption and global terrorism. He has been at the forefront of looking for ways to work with the Obama administration on these and other issues.

has pushed for increased funding for [FRONTEX](#), the EU agency that coordinates the operational cooperation in the field of border security among member-states. His committee will be responsible for dealing with the issues of [refugees and Guantánamo](#).

**Issues:** Refugees, Border Security, Immigration, Guantanamo, Shared Information on Banking Networks for Counterterrorism  
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**Jo Leinen, Chairman of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety**  
(Germany, S&D)

Leinen, first elected to the EP in 1999, is slated to be the Chair of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety, a powerful committee assigned with three disparate portfolios.

The former environment minister for his home state in Germany has stated that a European climate package must be

**independent** of the outcome of the Copenhagen negotiations. He is a strong proponent of the **20-20-20 targets** regardless of any coordinated Copenhagen agreement. An opponent of nuclear energy, Leinen is a strong supporter of the Desertec Program as an alternative. The US\$600 billion endeavor would be implemented jointly by the EU, Morocco and Algeria to create the world's largest **solar-energy project** in the Sahara Desert. Leinen will be the driving force behind hydraulic and solar energy. He has said that if Europe does not invest in **green R&D** it risks falling behind the US in a sector that he sees as key to pulling Europe out of the economic crisis.

Most recently, Leinen has been out in front dealing with a coordinated European response to the spread of the **H1N1** virus. He has warned that the number of Europeans infected with swine flu could reach **one million** by the end of this year and that delays in vaccinations across Europe and gaps in vaccinations in many central and eastern European countries could occur. Leinen is an important liaison for coordinated vaccination policy and response for Congressional members on the House and Senate Committees on Homeland Security.

**Issues:** Climate Change, Renewable Energy, Pandemic Response, Food Safety

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**Herbert Reul, Chairman of the Committee on Industry, Research and Energy**  
(Germany, EPP)

Herbert Reul has had an unexpectedly meteoric rise in the EP. He will quite possibly chair the body's most powerful committee: the Industry, Research and Energy Committee. Known for his close ties to industry and pro-market philosophy, Reul has asserted that industrial growth and sustainability must remain at the **heart** of the EU's work.

Reul is a known **skeptic** of the theory that

climate change is man-made and has prominently advocated the usage of atomic energy as a cost-effective source of energy for Europe. He has been an unapologetic representative of business interests in the climate debate and is expected to **clash** with Jo Leinen and his more ecologically strident vision.

the former FCC chair and Carlyle Group executive, recently named by President Obama to be his EU envoy. Reul's committee will also be responsible for trans-European energy delivery networks, such as pipelines. Future policy related to Russian gas delivery and the proposed **Nabucco** pipeline from the Caspian Sea to Austria will be top committee agenda items in the next EP session.

**Issues:** Energy, Telecommunications, R&D, Industry, the European Space Agency, Climate Change

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The committee's work in technology-intensive manufacturing, such as aerospace and telecommunications, will make him a frequent point of contact for **William Kennard**.