

The New European Parliament: All change or business as usual?

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Some of the recently published texts by the EPIN members: CEPS (Brussels): The New European Parliament: All change or business as usual? by Julia De Clerck-Sachsse.

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Following its first session in Strasbourg, the European Parliament (EP) is now set up for its new term. With a Polish President at its helm and a bigger share of parties to the right of centre, much could be expected to change. There are indeed some new developments in a more fragmented and conservative parliament in which the 'new member states' are no longer so new. Nevertheless, much will also continue along familiar lines. This is particularly true for the dominance of a grand coalition of the two biggest political groups in the EP, the European People's Party (EPP) and the European Socialists and Democrats (S&D), which will continue to shape politics in the new parliament. However, important changes could still come from another direction: If the Lisbon Treaty is ratified during the present term, this would enlarge the EP's powers considerably. At the same time, the treaty would extend the powers of national parliaments over EU legislation. The importance of national parliamentary control over further EU integration has been underlined in the recent ruling of the German Constitutional Court. This means that the EP might face increasing competition as the guardian of EU democracy.

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