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Research-minded MEPs: who's running?

Buzek, Ehler and Nica are standing again in European elections in May. Rübig, Reda and Henkel are bowing out

By Eanna Kelly

Fewer than half of the current 66-strong European Parliament research and industry committee (ITRE) have confirmed they are standing for re-election in May, while 14 say they definitely will not stand, and others are awaiting confirmation they have been selected, or deliberating for other reasons.

The chair of the committee, Poland's Jerzy Buzek, viewed as instrumental in advancing legislation on the EU's next research programme, Horizon Europe, is running again, but one of four vice-chairs is standing down.

Other longstanding research advocates in ITRE who are running include Germany's Christian Ehler and Romania's Dan Nica. These two MEPs together drafted Parliament's position on Horizon Europe, the EU's 2021-2027 research programme.

Included in the group of 14 confirmed not to be standing are some big names like Germany's Julia Reda, known for leading opposition to Parliament's recent, sweeping online copyright reform. Her staff say she is considering a PhD at MIT.

ITRE vice-chair Hans-Olaf Henkel, a strong and often critical voice on EU research over the past five years, will not be running again. Nor will Paul Rübig, former chairman of the Parliament's Science and Technology Options Assessment panel, which studies the scientific or technological aspects of legislation.

Then there are British committee members, who do not know if the UK will participate in the elections. Prime minister Theresa May does not want to, and her request last week for the date of the UK's withdrawal to be extended to 30 June was intended to avoid it, but there is the possibility that the EU insists on a longer extension when the EU Council meets in emergency session to discuss the issue on Wednesday.

At least nine MEPs are more than willing to stand, provided their national parties pick them again as candidates. The next couple of weeks should pad the field, with MEPs from Italy and other EU countries discovering whether they have been selected.

ITRE MEPs scrutinise EU legislation relating to research or industry. In the past five year term, the committee met 78 times, passing judgement on 64 files.

Current members of the committee hoping to get re-elected will not be on the next ITRE committee by default, and with so many unconfirmed or uncertain, it is too early to say how the political make-up of ITRE will shift.

Below, a full account of who's in, who's out - and who's somewhere in between.

MEPs in the ITRE committee running in 2019 elections



Jerzy Buzek
EPP, Poland



Morten Helveg Petersen
ALDE, Denmark



Christian Ehler
EPP, Germany



Dan Nica
S&D, Romania



Cristian-Silviu Buşoi
EPP, Romania



Reinhard Bütikofer
Greens, Germany



Jakob Dalunde
Greens, Sweden



Fredrick Federley
ALDE, Sweden



Igor Gräzin
ALDE, Estonia



Seán Kelly
EPP, Ireland



Jeppe Kofod
S&D, Denmark



Miapetra Kumpula-Natri
S&D, Finland



Edouard Martin
S&D, France



Tilly Metz
Greens, Luxembourg



Csaba Molnár
S&D, Hungary



Nadine Morano
EPP, France



Angelika Niebler
EPP, Germany



Sven Schulze
EPP, Germany



Rolandas Paksas
EDF, Lithuania



Neoklis Sylikiotis
GUE/NGL, Cyprus



Evžen Tošenovský
ECR, Czech Republic



Kathleen van Brempt
S&D, Belgium



Henna Virkkunen
EPP, Finland



Martina Werner
S&D, Germany



Lieve Wierinck
ALDE, Belgium



Anna Záborská
EPP, Slovakia



Carlos Zorrinho
S&D, Portugal



Running

- Jerzy Buzek, Poland, European Peoples' Party (chair)
- Morten Helveg Petersen, Denmark, Liberals group (vice-chair)
- Jaromír Kohlíček, Czechia, Confederal Group of the European United Left (vice-chair)
- Cristian-Silviu Buşoi, Romania, European Peoples' Party
- Reinhard Butikofer, Germany, Greens
- Jakop Dalunde, Sweden, Greens
- Christian Ehler, Germany, European Peoples' Party
- Fredrick Federley, Sweden, Liberals
- Igor Gräzin, Estonia, Liberals
- Eva Kaili, Greece, Socialists and Democrats
- Seán Kelly, Ireland, European Peoples' Party
- Jeppe Kofod, Denmark, Socialists and Democrats
- Miapetra Kumpula-Natri, Finland, Socialists and Democrats
- Edouard Martin, France, Socialists and Democrats
- Tilly Metz, Luxembourg, Greens
- Csaba Molnár, Hungary, Socialists and Democrats
- Nadine Morano, France, European Peoples' Party
- Dan Nica, Romania, Socialists and Democrats
- Angelika Niebler, Germany, European Peoples' Party
- Rolandas Paksas, Lithuania, Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group
- Sven Schulze, Germany, European Peoples' Party
- Neoklis Sylikiotis, Cyprus, Confederal Group of the European United Left
- Evžen Tošenovský, Czechia, European Conservatives and Reformists Group
- Kathleen Van Brempt, Belgium, Socialists and Democrats
- Henna Virkkunen, Finland, European Peoples' Party
- Martina Werner, Germany, Socialists and Democrats
- Lieve Wierinck, Belgium, Liberals
- Anna Záborská, Slovakia, European Peoples' Party
- Carlos Zorrinho, Portugal, Socialists and Democrats

Not running

- Hans-Olaf Henkel, Germany, European Conservatives and Reformists Group (vice-chair)
- Bendt Bendtsen, Denmark, European Peoples' Party
- Xabier Benito Ziluaga, Spain, Confederal Group of the European United Left
- José Blanco López, Spain, Socialists and Democrats
- Edward Czesak, Poland, European Conservatives and Reformists Group
- Adam Gierek, Poland, Socialists and Democrats
- Rebecca Harms, Germany, Greens
- Barbara Kappel, Austria, Europe of Nations and Freedom Group
- Carolina Punset, Spain, Liberals
- Julia Reda, Germany, Greens
- Paul Rübig, Austria, European Peoples' Party
- Algirdas Saudargas, Lithuania, European Peoples' Party
- Flavio Zanonato, Italy, Socialists and Democrats
- Miroslav Poche, Czechia, Socialists and Democrats

Hopeful, but awaiting confirmation

- Patrizia Toia, Italy, Socialists and Democrats (vice-chair)
- David Borrelli, Italy, non-attached member
- Angelo Ciocca, Italy, Europe of Nations and Freedom Group
- Peter Kouroumbashev, Bulgaria, Socialists and Democrats
- Zdzisław Krasnodębski, Poland, European Conservatives and Reformists Group
- Angelika Mlinar, Austria, Liberals
- Aldo Patriciello, Italy, European Peoples' Party
- Massimiliano Salini, Italy, European Peoples' Party
- Dario Tamburrano, Italy, Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group

Awaiting Brexit outcome

- Jonathan Bullock, UK, Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy Group
- Ashley Fox, UK, European Conservatives and Reformists Group
- Theresa Griffin, UK, Socialists and Democrats

Didn't confirm status to Science | Business

- Zigmantas Balčytis, Lithuania, Socialists and Democrats
- Nikolay Barekov, Bulgaria, European Conservatives and Reformists Group
- Pilar del Castillo Vera, Spain, European Peoples' Party
- András Gyürk, Hungary, European Peoples' Party
- Béla Kovács, Hungary, non-attached member
- Christelle Lechevalier, France, Europe of Nations and Freedom Group
- Janusz Lewandowski, Poland, European Peoples' Party
- Paloma López Bermejo, Spain, Confederal Group of the European United Left
- Aleksejs Loskutovs, Latvia, European Peoples' Party
- Vladimir Urutchev, Bulgaria, European Peoples' Party
- Hermann Winkler, Germany, European Peoples' Party

