

70 years of the European Parliament: Commemoration Celebration



News

Anna Pingen

On 22 November 2022, the President of the European Parliament *Roberta Metsola* addressed the Plenary Session in Strasbourg to commemorate the European Parliament's 70 years of existence. 10 September 2022 marked the 70th anniversary of the first meeting of the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Parliament's forerunner. The ECSC convened in 1952 for the first time and comprised 78 appointed parliamentarians from the national parliaments of each member state. In 1958, following the creation of the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy Community, the Common Assembly of the ECSC was enlarged and renamed the "European Parliamentary Assembly". In 1962, it adopted the name "European Parliament".

In her opening remarks, President *Metsola* observed that, in the 70 years since the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community held its inaugural meeting, the "Assembly grew from strength to strength". She added: "The European Parliament has become the only directly elected, multilingual, multi-party transnational parliament in the world. Its 705 directly elected members are the expression of European public opinion (...)".

Her speech was followed by [contributions from the prime ministers](#) of the three countries hosting Parliament's seat, namely Belgium's Prime Minister *Alexander de Croo*, Luxembourg's Prime Minister *Xavier Bettel*, and France's Prime Minister *Élisabeth Borne*. All three emphasised the significance of the EP's role and actions.

In line with the prime ministers, most of the seven political group leaders underpinned the credo that only a democratic Europe has a future. While some political group leaders voiced critical and anti-European sentiments, Ms *Metsola* emphasised that this only serves to demonstrate the existence of democracy, pluralism, and pluralistic perspectives in the Parliament.

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