



Camera  
dei  
deputati

19<sup>TH</sup> PARLIAMENT

# Inside the Chamber of Deputies

A DAY IN MONTECITORIO





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# Welcome



When you enter Montecitorio, you embark on a journey of immersion in the memory of our country.

As you walk through the rooms viewing the works of art on display, captivated by the magnificence of the building's architecture, you feel you are beholding the political life that has shaped the history of Italy over the decades.

Yet, Montecitorio is not only a place of remembrance; it is the seat of the Chamber of Deputies, which, together with the Senate of the Republic, constitutes the Italian Parliament.

Article 1 of the Italian Constitution encapsulates the essence of the Republic: "Sovereignty belongs to the people and is exercised by the people in the forms and within the limits of the Constitution".

And it is in the Plenary Hall of Palazzo Montecitorio that one witnesses the highest expression of this constitutional principle: for this is where the representatives of the people sit, elected by universal and direct suffrage, as provided by Article 56 of the Constitution. Montecitorio is the seat of the "sovereignty of the people", an indefeasible principle and the prerequisite of democracy itself, where the legislative function

is exercised, and where all the decisions that govern the life of the body politic are debated, voted on and approved.

A place where all our citizens are represented. This is why the Chamber also welcomes young visitors by offering them guided tours as well as events and educational programmes, to enable them to gain an understanding of democracy at work underpinning our institutions, to appreciate its values and its apparent fragility, helping to bridge the distance one may feel when approaching politics. Experiencing Parliament from the inside can provide a stimulus to study and reflect on our democratic life, enabling us to take on board the core elements of civic education that every citizen should possess as their common heritage.

You will find some of these elements in this booklet, which will help you to get acquainted with Palazzo Montecitorio, its history and the values for which it stands and from which it draws inspiration.

In this place, every political group is free to express its ideas and its demands, guaranteed by the safeguards of parliamentary debate. Our State is underpinned by the principles of the

rule of law, where the decisions taken are never the will of any one individual, but are the result of a careful balancing of the interests of the whole community, in which everyone's contribution is essential.

Democracy, as 'government of all' and 'for all', rests on the resolute endorsement of its values by the entire national community. And the values for which it stands must never be taken for granted. In many countries they are still a mirage. We must do everything to attract the most passionate engagement in its life and work, in the most diverse forms, to enable each and everyone to identify with the free institutions of our State.

This active participation is the lifeblood of all democratic institutions, which "are like fortresses, they must be both well built and properly manned", as the philosopher Karl Popper so aptly put it.

Lorenzo Fontana  
*President of the Chamber of Deputies*

# The Italian Parliament

## IN FOCUS

By virtue of two constitutional amendments (Law No. 1 of 2000 amending Article 48 and Law No. 1 of 2001 amending Articles 56 and 57), Italian citizens residing abroad have the right to elect Members to the two Houses of Parliament in an Overseas Constituency (namely 8 Deputies and 4 Senators in compliance with Constitutional Law No. 1 of 2020).

## One Parliament, two Houses

The Italian Constitution provides for two Houses of Parliament, both of which are directly elected by citizens: the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate of the Republic. The two Houses hold identical powers (hence the definition of 'perfect bicameralism'), even though they differ in their number of Members under Articles 56 and 57 of the Constitution.

## The Chamber of Deputies

The seat of the Chamber of Deputies is Palazzo Montecitorio in Rome. Like the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies is elected every 5 years, except in cases of early dissolution. 400 members of the Chamber, known as Deputies, are elected by citizens who have reached the age of 18 years. The minimum age for election to the Chamber of Deputies is 25 years.



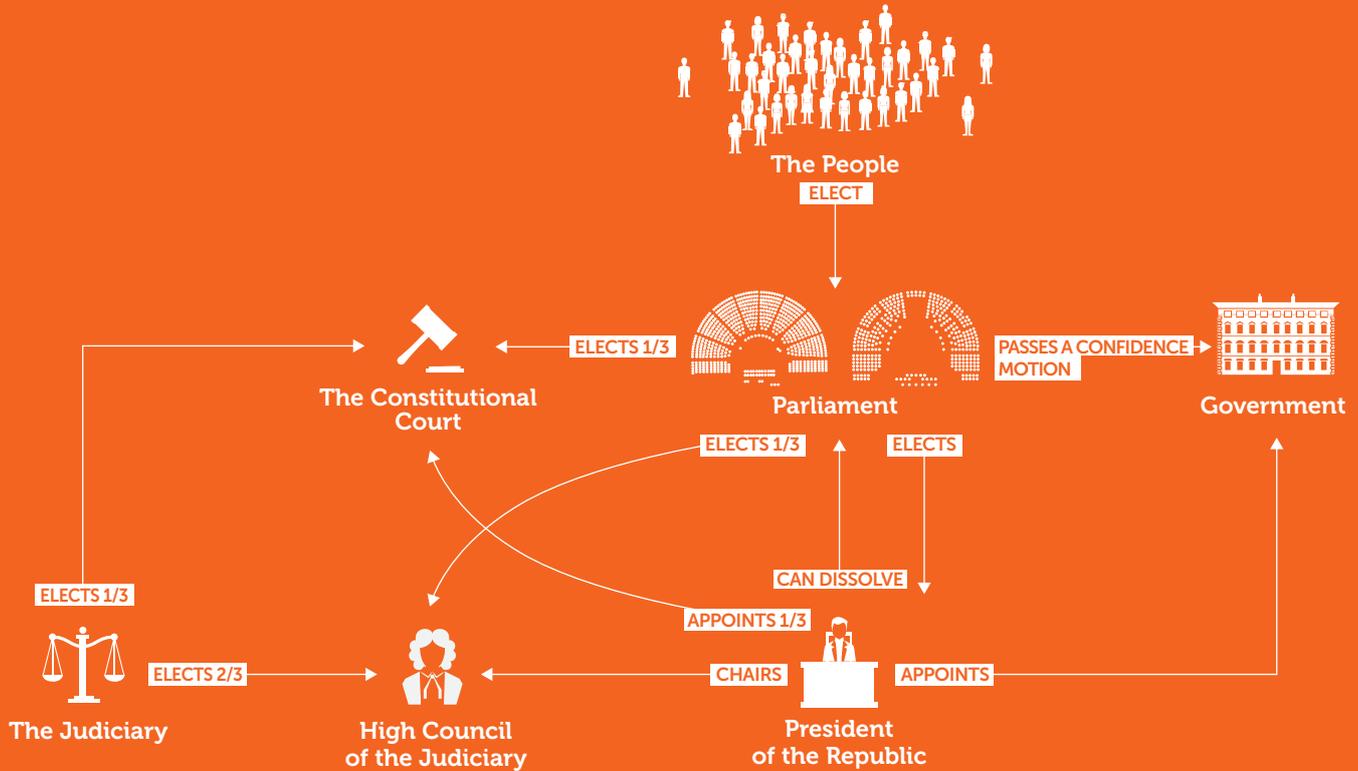


## The Senate of the Republic

The seat of the Senate is Palazzo Madama in Rome. 200 members of the Senate, known as Senators, are elected by citizens who have reached the age of 18 years. The minimum age for election to the Senate is 40 years. In addition to its elected members, the Senate also includes some life-long appointees, known as Senators for life. These can be former Presidents of the Republic (Senators by right and for life) or citizens “who have brought honour to the Nation because of outstanding merit in the social, scientific, artistic or literary fields” (Article 59 of the Constitution).

*The façade of  
Palazzo Montecitorio*

# Parliament and the powers of the State





# The functions of Parliament

## IN FOCUS

Every seven years the two Houses of Parliament convene in joint session in the Plenary Hall of Palazzo Montecitorio to elect the President of the Republic. In addition to the Members of Parliament, three delegates from each region of Italy (apart from Valle d'Aosta, which has one delegate only) also participate in the election of the Head of State. The election of the President of the Republic is held by secret ballot and initially requires the favourable votes of two thirds of the assembled body. After the third ballot, a simple majority shall suffice.

*External elevation of Palazzo Montecitorio*

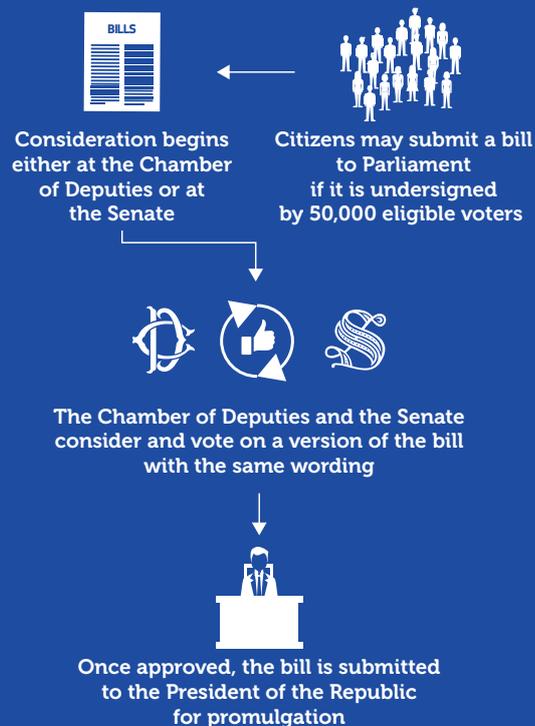
## Democratic deliberation

Parliament represents all citizens and is the place where the elected representatives of political forces engage in democratic debate. Its main tasks are granting or withdrawing its confidence in the government, the making of laws as well as policy setting and oversight over government action.

Under Article 64 of the Constitution, the decisions of each House require the approval of the majority of the Members present, except when a special majority is prescribed. The decisions of each House shall not be valid unless a majority of the Members is present.

## The legislative function

The legislative function is exercised collectively by both Houses of Parliament: this means that a bill (more specifically, "Government bills" are those introduced by the Government, while the term "bill" is used in all other cases) can only be-





come law if it is approved in the same wording by both Houses. Until both Houses of Parliament concur on the same text, the bill will continue to pass or “shuttle” back and forth from one House to the other. If a bill has been approved by the Chamber of Deputies and then passed with amendments by the Senate, the Chamber of Deputies will limit itself to deliberating and potentially modifying only the amendments proposed by the Senate, and will send the new version of the bill back to the Senate.

The Constitution stipulates that the Government may not, without delegated powers from the Houses (by means of specific delegated legislation), issue decrees having the force of ordinary law except in extraordinary cases of necessity and urgency. In such exceptional cases, the Government may adopt under its own responsibility provisional measures having the force of law (so-called decree-laws), which on the same day must be submitted to the Houses for enactment into law within the following sixty days. Decree-laws lose their effectiveness from the beginning if they are not enacted into law within sixty days from their publication.

## Confidence and no-confidence

Within ten days of its formation, the Government shall go before each House of Parliament to seek confidence. Given that all parliamentary activity is premised on the existence of a fiduciary relationship between the majority of the MPs of both Houses and the Government, the vote on the motion of confidence in the Government is a solemn and consequential act during which MPs are called up one by one to declare aye or nay (or to abstain) before the bench of the President of the relevant House. A Government that fails to win the confidence of Parliament must resign from office.

If the Houses are unable to secure majority support for a Government, the President of the Republic, after consulting the Presidents of the two Houses, may dissolve Parliament and call early elections.

At any time, Deputies or Senators may submit a motion of no-confidence in the government, which must be signed by at least one tenth of the Members of the relevant House. In addition, the Government may raise a question of confidence (on an article of a law or an amendment or a policy-setting instrument), in order to verify the existence of the fiduciary relationship. If the motion of no-confidence is passed or the question of confidence rejected, the Government must resign.

## Oversight over government action

Government oversight is one of the crucial functions exercised by Parliament, which has numerous tools at its disposal to this end.

MPs may submit written questions to the Government seeking information about specific matters or about the Government's intentions in respect of certain issues. The Government responds to these questions either in the Plenary or before a Parliamentary Committee or else in writing, depending on the MP's request. On most Wednesdays, the Plenary of the House holds a "question-time" session, which is broadcast live on television, at which the Government responds directly to questions pertaining to matters of particular urgency or political relevance. Both the questions and the answers are kept brief. Question time can also take place before a Standing Parliamentary Committee.

Interpellations are written requests for clarification of the reasons for or the purpose of political action taken by the Government. The Government replies to interpellations during plenary sittings.

Both Houses of Parliament also have the power to investigate matters of public interest by establishing Committees of inquiry, which may also be bicameral. Committees of inquiry enjoy the same powers, and are subject to the same restrictions, as the judiciary.

## The Presidents of the Republic



**ENRICO DE NICOLA**

1 January 1948  
12 May 1948  
1<sup>st</sup> ballot



**LUIGI EINAUDI**

12 May 1948  
11 May 1955  
4<sup>th</sup> ballot



**GIOVANNI GRONCHI**

11 May 1955  
11 May 1962  
4<sup>th</sup> ballot



**ANTONIO SEGNI**

11 May 1962  
6 December 1964  
9<sup>th</sup> ballot



**GIUSEPPE SARAGAT**

29 December 1964  
29 December 1971  
21<sup>st</sup> ballot



**GIOVANNI LEONE**

29 December 1971  
15 June 1978  
23<sup>rd</sup> ballot



**SANDRO PERTINI**

9 July 1978  
29 June 1985  
16<sup>th</sup> ballot



**FRANCESCO COSSIGA**

3 July 1985  
28 April 1992  
1<sup>st</sup> ballot



**OSCAR LUIGI SCALFARO**

28 May 1992  
15 May 1999  
16<sup>th</sup> ballot



**CARLO AZEGLIO CIAMPI**

18 May 1999  
15 May 2006  
1<sup>st</sup> ballot



**GIORGIO NAPOLITANO**

15 May 2006  
22 April 2013  
4<sup>th</sup> ballot



**GIORGIO NAPOLITANO**

22 April 2013  
14 January 2015  
6<sup>th</sup> ballot



**SERGIO MATTARELLA**

3 February 2015  
3 February 2022  
4<sup>th</sup> ballot



**SERGIO MATTARELLA**

3 February 2022  
current office-holder  
8<sup>th</sup> ballot

# The history of the Italian Parliament

## IN FOCUS

The referendum of 2 June 1946 recorded a very high voter turnout. The voters numbered 24,946,878, which corresponded to 89.08% of the electorate.

The votes in favour of establishing a Republic numbered 12,718,641, or 54.27% of valid ballots; the votes in favour of retaining the monarchy numbered 10,718,502, or 45.73% of valid ballots.

*First sitting  
of the Constituent  
Assembly  
25 June 1946*

## The Albertine Statute

In 1848, before the unification of Italy, King Carlo Alberto granted the subjects of the Kingdom of Sardinia a constitutional charter, known as the Albertine Statute. The Statute provided for two Houses of Parliament, the Senate of the Kingdom and the Chamber of Deputies.

Only the Chamber of Deputies was elected (the franchise was based on the census and excluded women). Senators, on the other hand, were appointed by the King acting on the advice of the Government, and were drawn from a restricted class with high social prestige: former Deputies, former Ministers, Ambassadors, Prefects, senior army officers, industrialists, members of the Judiciary, bishops and figures from the world of culture. Royal princes were members of the Senate by birthright.

## United Italy

After the unification of Italy, the Albertine Statute

was extended to the whole country. The first Italian Parliament, convening in Turin, proclaimed the birth of the Kingdom of Italy. The enacting law was promulgated on 17 March 1861. The nation's capital and parliament were transferred to Florence in 1865, and ultimately to Rome in 1871 after the Papal State was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy.

## Fascism

During the Fascist period (1922-1943), the autonomy of the Chamber of Deputies was progressively restricted and free elections were banned. In 1924, the reformist Socialist MP Giacomo Matteotti was seized and killed after he spoke out in Parliament against the electoral fraud that had accompanied the elections of that year. Between 1925 and 1926, the promulgation of a series of "ultra-fascist" laws [leggi fascistissime] definitively transformed Italy into an authoritarian state. In 1939, the Chamber of Deputies was replaced by a national Chamber of Fasces and Corporations,



whose members were called “national councilors” and belonged either to the single party or to the corporative associations of the Fascist regime.

## The rebirth of democracy

On 2 June 1946, in the aftermath of the Second World War, the Italian electorate was asked by referendum to choose between a republic and a monarchy, and chose the former. On the same day, a Constituent Assembly was elected and assigned the task of replacing the Albertine Statute with a new constitutional charter. The referendum of 2 June and the election of the Constituent Assembly were the first national votes in which Italian women had the right to the franchise.

On 1 January 1948, the Italian Constitution came into force. The Constituent Assembly resolved to establish a Parliament made up of two elected Houses with equal powers. The first Parliament of the Republic was elected on 18 April 1948.



## The right to vote and its historical evolution

According to Article 48 of the Constitution, “all citizens, men and women, who have attained the age of majority, are entitled to vote. The vote is personal and equal, free and secret.” This affirmation, which now seems no more than the avowal of an indisputable right, asserted what was actually a relatively recent attainment that had taken several steps to achieve. It was in 1848 that the first electoral law was enacted in Italy, enfranchising only male citizens over the age of 25 who could read and write and paid at least 40 lire in taxes. In 1882, the franchise was expanded to include male citizens who had reached the age of 21 and had received at least an elementary school education. The qualifying level of income was also lowered.

In 1912, under the government of Giovanni Giolitti, a large majority approved an electoral reform extending voting rights to all male citizens over the age of 30. Men who had reached the age of 21 were also eligible to vote, provided that they could read and write or were in possession

of additional requisites, such as past military service or liability to a certain level of taxation.

## The enfranchisement of women and universal suffrage

Women’s right to vote is a fairly recent achievement in almost all European countries. In Italy in 1919, the Chamber of Deputies approved a bill extending voting rights to women by a large majority, but due to the early dissolution of Parliament the bill could not be approved by the Senate of the Kingdom. Women’s request for voting rights got stalled when they seemed to be one step away from being recognised. It was not until February 1945, with the war still in progress, that the right to vote for women was recognised.

On 2 June 1946 women were allowed to vote for the first time nationwide on the occasion of the referendum on the monarchy and in the elections for the Constituent Assembly, to which 21 women MPs were returned.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Parliament, 129 women were elected to the Chamber of Deputies, equal to 32% of the Members of the House.

### IN FOCUS

At the time of the unification of Italy, only 22% of the population was literate, and a tax bill of 40 lire per year corresponded to a very high level of income. As a result of these restrictions, the electorate made up just 2% of the population.

*Hall of the She-wolf*

# The Italian Constitution

## The Basic Law of the Republic

The Constitution forms the Basic Law of the Republic of Italy and is the fruit of the work of the Constituent Assembly, which approved it on 22 December 1947. The Constitution prescribes the values and basic precepts of our civil life, articulates the rights and duties of citizens, and lays out the basic laws governing the organisation of the Republic. Knowledge of the Constitution is a prerequisite for good citizenship and for participating in democratic life with sound understanding and independence of judgement.

## The structure of the Constitution

The Constitution is made up of 139 articles and 18 transitory and final provisions. The first 12 articles lay down the “Fundamental Principles”, which enumerate the general, basic values on which the Republic is founded. The remaining articles are divided into two parts: the first Part, divided into Titles, sets out the “Rights and Duties of Citizens”, namely civil relations (freedoms and

liberties), ethical and social relations (families, children, health, arts and sciences, education), economic relations (work, trade unions, economic enterprise, cooperative enterprise, ownership of property and savings) and political relations (voting, citizen participation in political life through parties, access to elected and public office, duties towards the State, etc.). The second Part is dedicated to the “Organisation of the Republic” and is likewise divided into several Titles: the first one relates to the structure, composition, powers and procedural rules of Parliament and, in a separate section, to the making of laws. Title II of this second part of the Constitution relates to the President of the Republic, who represents national unity. Title III deals with Government and is divided into sections relating to: the Council of Ministers; the Public Administration; and Auxiliary Bodies (namely the National Council for the Economy and Labour, the Council of State and the Court of Auditors). Title IV refers to the Judiciary and the administration of justice. Title V refers to the governing powers and functions of the Regions, Provinces and Municipalities. Title VI, which is dedicated to constitutional guarantees, consists of two sections, one relating to the Constitutional Court and the other to amendments to the Constitution and the adoption of constitutional laws.

*Original text of the Constitution on display in the Hall of the She-wolf*

ORIGINALE  
DA L'ASSEMBLEA  
DELLA ARCHIVE

# COSTITUZIONE DELLA REPUBBLICA ITALIANA

## IL CAPO PROVVISORIO DELLO STATO

VISTA la deliberazione dell'Assemblea Costituente, che nella seduta del 22 dicembre 1947 ha approvato la Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana;

VISTA la XVIII disposizione finale della Costituzione;

### PROMULGA

la Costituzione della Repubblica Italiana nel seguente testo:

### PRINCIPI FONDAMENTALI

#### ART. 1.

L'Italia è una Repubblica democratica, fondata sul lavoro.

La sovranità appartiene al popolo, che la esercita nelle forme e nei limiti della Costituzione.

#### ART. 2.

La Repubblica riconosce e garantisce i diritti inviolabili dell'uomo, sia come singolo sia nelle formazioni sociali ove si svolge la sua personalità, e richiede l'adempimento dei doveri inderogabili di solidarietà politica, economica e sociale.

#### ART. 3.

Tutti i cittadini hanno pari dignità sociale e sono eguali davanti alla legge, senza distinzione di sesso, di razza, di lingua, di religione, di opinioni politiche, di condizioni personali e sociali.

È compito della Repubblica rimuovere gli ostacoli di ordine economico e sociale, che, limitando di fatto la libertà e l'eguaglianza dei cittadini, impediscono il pieno sviluppo della persona umana e l'effettiva partecipazione di tutti i lavoratori all'organizzazione politica, economica e sociale del Paese.

#### ART. 4.

La Repubblica riconosce a tutti i cittadini il diritto al lavoro e promuove le condizioni che rendono effettivo questo diritto.

Ogni cittadino ha il dovere di svolgere secondo le proprie possibilità e la propria scelta, un'attività o una funzione che concorra al progresso materiale o spirituale della società.

#### ART. 5.

La Repubblica, una e indivisibile, riconosce e promuove le autonomie locali; attua nei servizi che dipendono dallo Stato il più ampio decentramento amministrativo; adegua i principi ed i metodi della sua legislazione alle esigenze dell'autonomia e del decentramento.

#### ART. 6.

La Repubblica tutela con apposite norme le minoranze linguistiche.

#### ART. 7.

Lo Stato e la Chiesa cattolica sono, ciascuno nel proprio ordine, indipendenti e sovrani.

I loro rapporti sono regolati dai Patti Lateranensi. Le modificazioni dei Patti, accettate dalle due parti, non richiedono procedimento di revisione costituzionale.

#### ART. 8.

Tutte le confessioni religiose sono egualmente libere davanti alla legge.

Le confessioni religiose diverse dalla cattolica hanno diritto di organizzarsi secondo i propri statuti, in quanto non contrastino con l'ordinamento giuridico italiano.

## Amendments to the Constitution

The Italian Constitution has been revised several times since 1948. The amendments have been introduced in accordance with the specific procedure envisaged by Article 138 of the Constitution itself, which prescribes that any changes require a special majority rather than the simple majority which suffices for the approval of ordinary laws. Both Houses of Parliament must approve a constitutional amendment twice, without any intervening changes in the wording of the amendment, and with an interval of at least three months between the first and second approval.

The second vote in each House requires at least an absolute majority (half plus one of the Members) to be valid. Further, if the amendment is approved on the second vote by an absolute majority only, but by less than two thirds of the Members of either House, a confirmatory referendum may be demanded by 500,000 voters, by one fifth of the Members of either House, or by five Regional Councils. If a majority of the valid votes of the electorate are favourable, a relevant law is promulgated and the amendment takes effect.



# The autonomy of the Chamber of Deputies

## IN FOCUS

The current Rules of Procedure of the Chamber of Deputies came into effect in 1971 when, under the presidency of Sandro Pertini, Deputies approved their adoption with 465 votes in favour, 41 against and just one abstention. The Rules of Procedure have been modified several times since, and some of the changes have been significant. The latest rule changes, approved in 2012, concerned the Parliamentary Groups and notably imposed strict obligations of transparency and financial reporting with respect to the financial resources allocated to them. Then, in 2022 some changes were introduced following the reduction of the number of Deputies.

*The Plenary Hall seen from the President's desk*

## The House Rules

As befits the principles of a modern Constitution, the Italian State divides its institutional powers among mutually independent and autonomous branches of government. The autonomy of Parliament is asserted primarily through its right to adopt its own rules of organisation and procedure. While the Constitution lays down the general rules to which Parliament is bound, it also grants each House the power to regulate its own activities autonomously and to adopt its own rules by an absolute majority (half plus one of the Members) provided that they comply with the precepts of the Constitution. The Rules of the Chamber of Deputies enumerate the rights and duties of Deputies, prescribe the methods for the election of the President and other bodies of the House and specify the tasks to be assigned to them, determine how parliamentary work is to be organised and how to set the order of business for each sitting, and establish the procedures for the debate and voting of bills and other matters to be considered by the Chamber and its bodies.

## Amendments to the Rules

Amendments to the Rules of Procedure of the Chamber also require the favourable votes of an absolute majority of its Members. Since consensus on the validity of rules is fundamental for a democracy, Parliament throughout its history has always sought to achieve the broadest possible agreement between the Majority and the Opposition on the adoption or amendment of the Rules of Procedure.

## The budget

The Chamber of Deputies also enjoys financial autonomy from other State bodies: every year it approves its own internal budget, specifying how it intends to use the financial resources available to it to carry out its functions.



# The President of the Chamber of Deputies

## Functions

At the start of a new Parliament, the Deputies elect the President of the Chamber by secret ballot.

This election requires a majority of two thirds of the Members of the House in the first ballot, two thirds of the votes in the second and third ballots, and an absolute majority of votes from the fourth ballot. The President has several different functions corresponding to different aspects of parliamentary life. Above all, the President represents the Chamber of Deputies and is responsible for ensuring the unimpeded performance of its activities by enforcing observance of the Rules of Procedure. The President also chairs the Bureau, the body responsible for the internal Administration of the Chamber, which is under the direction of a Secretary General who reports to the President.

The President has also specific tasks pertaining directly to his or her speakership functions in the Chamber. The President therefore chairs and moderates parliamentary debates, gives the floor to Deputies, maintains order in the House, decides the admissibility of bills, amendments, orders, motions, questions, interpellations and other parliamentary instruments, determines the order of voting, clarifies the meaning of votes, and announces the outcome of votes. The President also convenes the Conference of Group Chairpersons to organise and schedule the ac-

tivities of the House. If a majority as prescribed by the House Rules cannot be found among the Group Chairpersons, the task of defining the programme of activities and setting the order of business falls to the President alone.

The President carries out these functions impartially and disinterestedly by ensuring that the Rules of Procedure are observed by all parties. The President is thus a guarantor without partisan interests who, with impartiality and even-handedness, enables every MP, Group, and the Government itself to exercise their functions freely in accordance with the Constitution and the Rules of Procedure.

## Duties beyond the chairing of debates

The President is the presiding officer not only of the Plenary but also of other collegiate bodies, which are of fundamental importance for the organisation of the Chamber's work.

- The Bureau is one such. It is made up of: four Vice-Presidents, who stand in for the President in case of the latter's absence or incapacity; three Quaestors, who supervise the expenditure of the Chamber, matters of House protocol as well as the upholding of order in the Chamber premises in accordance with the instructions laid down by the President, and draw up the



budget; and at least eight Secretaries drawn from the ranks of Deputies, who assist the President in managing debates on the Floor of the House and verifying the validity of votes. The Bureau concerns itself with high-level administrative business and is responsible for imposing penalties on Deputies for rule violations.

- The Conference of Group Chairpersons has the important task of organising the work of the Plenary, to which end it draws up the programme and the order of business.
- The Committee on the Rules of Procedure is responsible for issuing opinions on the interpretation of the Rules of Procedure upon request of the President, and for drawing up proposed rule changes, which must be submitted to the Plenary for approval.

## The Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies since 1948

Lorenzo **Fontana** 2022-present,  
Roberto **Fico** 2018-2022, Laura **Boldrini** 2013-2018,  
Gianfranco **Fini** 2008-2013, Fausto **Bertinotti** 2006-2008,  
Pier Ferdinando **Casini** 2001-2006, Luciano **Violante** 1996-2001,  
Irene **Pivetti** 1994-1996, Giorgio **Napolitano** 1992-1994,  
Oscar Luigi **Scalfaro** April-May 1992, Leonilde **Iotti** 1979-1992,  
Pietro **Ingrao** 1976-1979, Sandro **Pertini** 1968-1976,  
Brunetto **Bucciarelli Ducci** 1963-1968,  
Giovanni **Leone** 1955-1963, Giovanni **Gronchi** 1948-1955.

# The Deputies

## IN FOCUS

The Rules of Procedure provide for two parliamentary bodies whose purpose is to give material effect to the constitutional prerogatives of Deputies. They are: the Committee on Elections, which evaluates the electoral qualifications of Deputies and considers cases of possible ineligibility, incompatibility with elected office and forfeiture; and the Committee on Waiver of Immunity, whose main tasks are to consider instances of non-liability for parliamentary statements and votes and to examine judicial warrants and acts that refer to Deputies. Both Committees issue recommendations, which must be submitted to the Plenary for approval.

## The functions and prerogatives of Deputies

A 'Deputy' is a person appointed or authorised to perform a function on behalf of another or others. Under the Italian system of representative democracy, a Deputy is one who has been elected to sit in the lower House of Parliament: the Chamber of Deputies.

Under the meaning of the Constitution, each House of Parliament decides on the validity of the election of each of its Members. Accordingly, each House verifies the soundness of the results of the election and examines whether an elected Member should be disbarred from office for reasons of ineligibility or incompatibility.

According to the Constitution, "Each Member of Parliament represents the Nation" (thus all citizens, not just his or her voters) "and shall discharge his or her duties without being subject to a binding mandate". In other words, an MP's acts or decisions are not constrained by commitments to any specific programme and remain completely discretionary.

To reinforce the principle that MPs shall enjoy full freedom of decision in the exercise of their mandate, the Constitution enshrines the doctrine of parliamentary privilege by affirming that "Members of Parliament may not be held liable for opinions expressed or votes cast in the discharge of their duties". Further safeguarding the right of MPs to exercise their parliamentary mandate freely is the obligation of judicial authorities to seek authorisation from the relevant House before ordering the arrest of an MP or taking any action that restricts the MP's personal freedom (except in the cases laid down in the Constitution itself). Another guarantee of the freedom of MPs to exercise their electoral mandate is embodied in the constitutional provision whereby Members of Parliament receive an allowance established by law. MPs are also entitled by law to a daily allowance as a reimbursement of expenses incurred for staying in Rome. The Chamber's Rules of Procedure stipulate that a deduction shall be made from the daily attendance allowance whenever an MP is absent from work in Parliament. The Chamber of Deputies also provides all its Members with the

necessary means and instruments for the efficient performance of their duties.

## Inside and outside the Halls of Parliament

Participating in debates in the Plenary, in the meetings of various parliamentary bodies and in the activities of political Groups, presenting bills and amendments, and submitting questions, interpellations, motions, etc. are all part of the work that MPs carry out inside the premises of Parliament, but their duties also entail plenty of off-premises work such as attending meetings in the offices of political parties and movements, as well as visiting citizens' associations and electoral constituencies. The political work of the Chamber of Deputies is sustained and enriched by this direct and ongoing contact with the social and economic fabric of the country.

*MPs' benches viewed from an unusual angle*

# The Parliamentary Groups

## IN FOCUS

The Rules of Procedure of the Chamber expressly state that a Deputy shall be free to take the floor to dissent from the position of his or her Group, and that a portion of the time available for the discussion of each item included in the order of business must be set aside for this purpose.

*Globe Room*

## A Group for every Deputy

The Rules of Procedure state that every Deputy must belong to a Parliamentary Group.

For the most part, Parliamentary Groups correspond to political parties and movements that have seats in the Chamber of Deputies following general elections. A Group must contain at least twenty Deputies (a minimum of fourteen shall suffice from the 20<sup>th</sup> Parliament). A Group containing fewer than twenty Deputies can be formed if it meets certain requisites set out in the Rules of Procedure (in line with the opinions on questions of interpretation of the Rules issued by the Committee on the Rules of Procedure) and receives the authorisation of the Bureau.

The Mixed Group encompasses all Deputies not belonging to another Group. Under certain conditions as laid down in the Rules, members of the Mixed Group may form into political groupings.

## Majority and Opposition

The Groups that have voted for the Government in a confidence motion and thereby approved the Government's programme and agreed to support its action form the governing Majority. The Opposition, by contrast, consists of the Groups that withheld their support in the confidence motion and that, by submitting alternative proposals in Parliament, seek to gather sufficient consensus to become the Majority in the future. There can be more than one Opposition if the various political Groups that did not vote confidence in the Government pursue policies that not only differ from those of the Government and the Majority, but also differ from each other. A healthy democracy must be able to tolerate political confrontation, including robust disagreement, between the Majority and the Opposition (or Oppositions) in Parliament on different political issues.

The presence of an Opposition is essential for our democratic system. Although they constitute





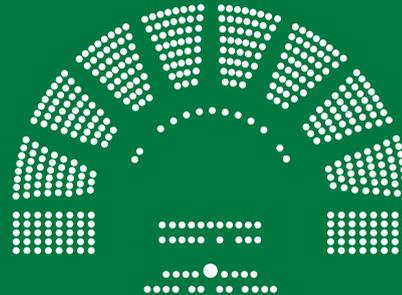


*Entrance to the Building of Parliamentary Groups*

a parliamentary minority, the Groups that make up the Opposition actively participate in parliamentary business, where their criticism and oversight serve to enrich and deepen political debate, as well as to articulate their objections to government action and propose alternative policies. The more intense the debate and the more societal conflicts find expression in the Plenary, on the basis of an agreed set of rules, the greater the proof of the strength and vitality of our democratic institutions. Naturally, the Ma-

jority and Opposition may come together on certain issues and combine their forces when the vital interests or the fundamental laws of the country are at stake.

## The Groups in the Chamber today



An up-to-date list of the current Parliamentary Groups is available under the relevant section of the website of the Chamber of Deputies ([www.camera.it](http://www.camera.it) - The Chamber of Deputies – Parliamentary bodies and their functions – Parliamentary Groups).

### IN FOCUS

If decisions pertaining to the organisation of the activities of the Plenary and Parliamentary Committees are made by the President of the Chamber or the Chairperson of a Committee because a large majority (at least three quarters of membership) could not be reached where required, the Rules of Procedure ensure that the Opposition shall in any case be guaranteed the right to determine one fifth of the items on the order of business or else shall be allocated one fifth of the time dedicated to debate.

*The new Hall of Parliamentary Groups*

# Parliamentary business on the Floor of the House

## IN FOCUS

When the Chamber of Deputies holds elections (such as for the appointment of its President or members of the Bureau), the voting is by secret ballot, usually by means of ballot papers. An MP Secretary calls the Deputies by name who, one at a time, receive the ballot paper, enter one of the voting booths set up in front of the President's desk, mark the ballot out of the sight of the other Members of the House and place it in an urn as they leave the booth.

The same voting system is used when the two Houses of Parliament are meeting in joint session.

*The Plenary Hall of the Chamber of Deputies*

## The heart of the Chamber of Deputies

The hub of the activities of the Chamber of Deputies is the Plenary Hall of Palazzo Montecitorio. This is the meeting room where all Members of the House sit, and where all the main decisions of the House are taken after discussing the items on the order of business. In particular, this is where Members debate and vote on bills and policy-setting instruments (motions and resolutions to guide government action), and where questions are raised and interpellations submitted.

Consideration of and voting on bills are the activities most associated with Parliament.

## Seating in the Plenary Hall

Every Deputy has his or her own place in the Plenary Hall. The seats, which are arranged in a semicircle around the President's desk, from left,

to centre to right, are allocated to match the political disposition of the Groups, and thus give concrete shape to the spectrum of political opinions in the country resulting from the elections. At the centre of the semicircle, beneath the desk of the President and facing the Deputies, are the benches of the Government, where the President of the Council of Ministers sits flanked by his or her Ministers and Undersecretaries. The President of the Chamber is flanked by MPs who have been appointed Secretaries and by parliamentary officials who assist the President in his or her work, supervise the drafting of the minutes of proceedings and of the official parliamentary reports.

## Voting

Most voting in the Plenary is by open ballot, with certain exceptions as specified in the Rules of Procedure. Voting is conducted by roll-call using an electronic system that immediately displays







*Unusual view of the façade facing Piazza del Parlamento*

the names of the MPs who voted and the result of the vote. When electronic voting is used, the names of the MPs and the voting choice of each are published in the verbatim report of the sitting. Votes are called by the President, who also announces the results of the same. Each Deputy's desk has three voting buttons: green for an 'aye', red for a 'nay' and white for an abstention (the President of the Chamber may never vote). The days on which votes are held and the days on which non-voting sittings are held are set out in the order of business of the House.

## Relations with the Government

In addition to the motion of confidence, the continuation of the necessary fiduciary relationship between Parliament and Government may be tested in the Plenary by means of a motion of no-confidence or by attaching a vote of confidence to a bill.

If signed by at least one tenth of the Members, a reasoned motion of no-confidence in the Government may be presented in either House aimed at promoting the withdrawal of confidence in the Government. The motion must be debated and voted on at least three days after its presentation and, if approved, forces the resignation of the Government. A motion of no-confidence may also be moved against a single Minister.

A vote of confidence may also be called by the Government, usually by attaching it to an article of a bill or to an amendment or else to a policy-setting instrument, if it intends to ask one of the Houses to reaffirm its confidence by approving, without modification, the text that it is sponsoring. If the motion of confidence fails, the Government must resign.

The Chamber of Deputies can also contribute to shaping government decisions by approving policy-setting instruments, such as motions, resolutions (these latter may also be examined by Parliamentary Committees) or orders containing guidelines to the Government, which commit the Executive to following a given course of action.

# The Standing Committees

## IN FOCUS

Where there is broad consensus on a bill (i.e., a unanimous request from the representatives of the Groups within a Committee or more than four fifths of the Members of a Committee acting in a reporting capacity and with the assent of the Government) and the required opinions have also been issued, the Plenary can decide to refer the bill to a Committee for final approval. The bill shall be returned to the Plenary for discussion if so requested by the Government, by one tenth of the members of the Chamber of Deputies or by one fifth of the members of the Committee.

A Committee entrusted to the direct approval of a bill is said to be acting in a legislating capacity.

## 14 Mini-parliaments

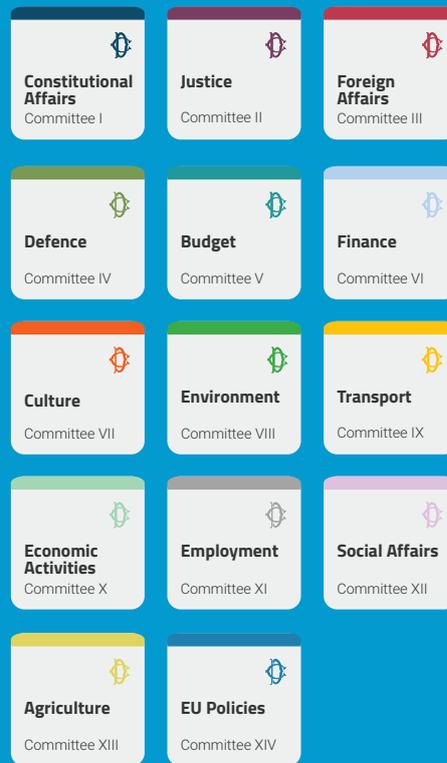
The Rules of Procedure of the Chamber of Deputies set the number of Standing Committees at 14 and defines their scope of competence. Each Standing Committee has a remit, encapsulated in its name, which covers a given sector of the general institutional sphere.

The membership of the Committees reflects the proportionate strengths of the Parliamentary Groups, which distribute their members among the Committees accordingly. In this sense, each Committee can be regarded as a sort of mini-parliament.

The Committees are established by electing a Chairperson and a Bureau, which consists of the Chairperson, two Vice-Chairpersons and two MPs acting as Secretaries. Each Standing Committee has its own meeting room.

## Pre-legislative scrutiny

When dealing with matters on which it must re-





*Detail of the meeting room of the Constitutional Affairs Committee*

port to the Plenary, a Committee is said to be acting in a reporting capacity. When issuing opinions, it is acting in an advisory capacity; when definitively approving a bill, it is acting in a legislating capacity; when drawing up the articles of a bill which the Floor of the House will enact by voting only on the articles and on the final version of the bill, it is acting in a drafting capacity. Standing Committees also convene to hear and discuss

government communications and to exercise their policy-setting, scrutiny and fact-finding functions in accordance with the Rules of Procedure.

While the debates in the Plenary Hall are the most visible and therefore best known part of the work of the Chamber of Deputies, the work done by the 14 Standing Committees is no less important and no less intense. As a rule, Committees may not sit at the same time as voting sessions on the Floor of the House.

## Informed decision-making

The Standing Committees have specific procedures for gathering intelligence and information through direct dialogue with representatives of the Government and other public servants, experts, representatives and exponents of civil society, the labour market, the professions and industries. In particular, Committees can conduct fact-finding investigations and hearings into matters that fall within their scope of competence in order to gather elements useful to their work and to the work of the Chamber of Deputies as a whole, and may hold hearings with any person who is in a position to offer evidence pertinent to the matters under consideration.

# The stages of law-making

The following are constitutionally entitled to present a bill to Parliament: any Member of the Senate or the Chamber of Deputies, the Government, Regional Councils, the National Council for the Economy and Labour, and citizens who have collected 50,000 signatures from the electorate. The normal passage of a bill can be divided into the following phases:

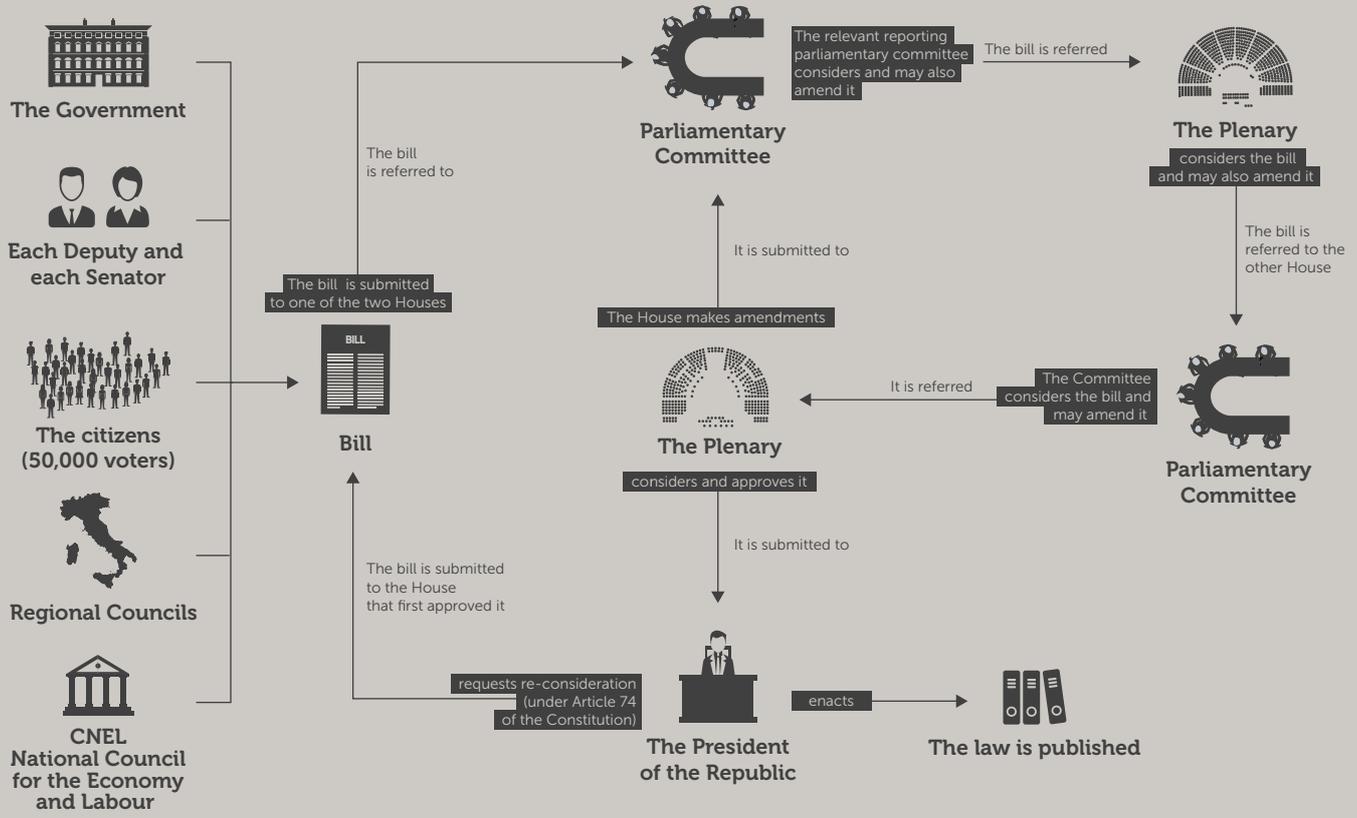
- The bill is first assigned to the appropriate Standing Committee that, acting in a reporting capacity, carries out a preliminary scrutiny in order to acquire any relevant intelligence and information. If a Committee has been assigned more bills on the same subject-matter, they shall be examined jointly. After this preliminary examination, the Committee examines the articles of the bill, often rewriting them in whole or in part or making amendments. During this phase, other Committees acting in an advisory capacity may issue opinions on the text when the bill relates to matters falling within their remit. The Committee stage comes to an end when the Plenary receives a report including the text of the bill drafted by the Committee.
- The Plenary then holds a debate on the general outline of the bill. Subsequently, the amendments presented to the text and the individual articles of the bill are examined and put to the vote. Finally, in line with the Constitution, the Plenary votes on the bill as a whole: once approved, it shall be transmitted to the Senate. In the Plenary Hall, the members of the reporting Committee that has considered the bill are seated around a

semi-circular table facing the benches of the Deputies. From there, the Rapporteur and the Chair of the Committee as well as the representatives of the political Groups on the Committee pilot the bill through the approval process.

If the Senate amends the bill, it will return to the Chamber, which shall only debate and deliberate on the amendments proposed by the Senate. If the Chamber amends the text again, it shall be further examined by the Senate, shuttling back and forth until both Houses of Parliament concur on the same text. Once both Houses of Parliament have approved the bill with the same wording, it passes to the President of the Republic for final promulgation. The President, however, may return the bill to the Houses with a reasoned message and request that they deliberate again. After promulgation, the law is published in the Official Journal and, as a rule, comes into force after 15 days.

## Improving the quality of legislation

The Committee on Legislation is made up of 10 Deputies, 5 from the Majority and 5 from the Opposition. Where so required by the Rules of Procedure, this Committee shall express an opinion on the quality of draft legislative texts under consideration before other Committees, with regard to their homogeneity, simplicity and clarity, and to their effectiveness in simplifying and reorganising the legislation currently in force.



# The Administration of the Chamber of Deputies

## IN FOCUS

The operating procedures of the Chamber of Deputies have been reviewed and revamped over the years, in a process that has entailed the large-scale adoption of innovative technologies (notably, the deployment of digital instruments) and a closer functional integration of the various Departments that make up the administrative apparatus.

*Hall of the She-wolf:  
detail of the ceiling*

## The administrative structure of the Chamber of Deputies

The administrative structure of the Chamber of Deputies is called upon to perform numerous and wide-ranging functions on a daily basis in order to guarantee the most effective and efficient functioning of the institution. In particular, the Administration has the task of ensuring all that is necessary for the smooth running of parliamentary work: to this effect, it provides assistance and support to the activities of Deputies and parliamentary bodies. The Secretary General, who reports to the President, is the head of the Administration, which is organised into Departments and Offices. The Administration divides its activities among:

- legislative departments, which are in charge of organising the work of and prepare reports for the various bodies of the Chamber (Plenary and Committees), assisting them in the conduct of

their business;

- documentation departments, which contribute to the work of parliamentary bodies by preparing documentation dossiers and research papers relating to legislation being examined by Committees and the Plenary, including documents pertaining to the EU and international affairs. The same departments are also responsible for updating the relevant information published on the Chamber of Deputies' website for the general public;
- administrative and technical departments, which are in charge of planning the activities of the Administration, the supply of goods and services, procurement, contract management, the protection of the artistic and architectural assets of the Chamber of Deputies, security, and personnel management.



# Open-door day

## IN FOCUS

At the end of every July, just before the summer break, the President of the Chamber of Deputies meets journalists for the so-called "Ceremony of the Fan". The ceremony involves the presentation of a fan to the President of the Chamber. The tradition dates back to the late nineteenth century, when the MPs used to conduct their business in the Comotto Hall (located in what is now the courtyard), a meeting room that was notorious for its high summertime temperatures.

*Enrico Colombo Hall,  
Library of the Chamber*

## Publicity of proceedings

As established by Article 64 of the Constitution, all the sittings of the Houses of Parliament are public (without prejudice to the right of Parliament to meet in a secret sitting). The requirement for the publicity of parliamentary sittings ensures that citizens can always apprise themselves of the matters being discussed and remain abreast of the current debates and the positions of their representatives in Parliament.

Anyone may observe the House at work in Palazzo Montecitorio by entering the public gallery that overlooks the semi-circular Plenary Hall. On the website [www.camera.it](http://www.camera.it) a web TV service provides a live feed of the Chamber, which is also broadcast on a satellite TV channel and on the Chamber of Deputies' YouTube channel. The website also gives visitors access to reports of sittings, which are also available in print. Reports of committee sittings are also pub-

licly available, both in print and on the Internet, and many Committee sittings, especially those involving hearings, are broadcast on the Web TV. Particularly important sittings of the Chamber are televised by public service broadcasters. On the website [comunicazione.camera.it](http://comunicazione.camera.it) you can follow all the news and find pictures, videos, documentation materials and insights on current topics and events.

## A House for citizens

The activities of the Chamber of Deputies are predicated on the principle of transparency, according to which everyone has the right to be informed about the work being done and the subjects of debate in the House. In recent years, therefore, the Chamber of Deputies has undertaken several initiatives in fulfilment of its vocation to be an institution "at the service of the citizens".



AULA

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In addition to the Web TV service ([webtv.camera.it](http://webtv.camera.it)) on the institutional website, the Chamber's social media provide real-time information and updates: a YouTube channel, a Facebook page, an account on X, @Montecitorio, an Instagram channel and a LinkedIn page.

The website *La Camera per i giovani* ([giovani.camera.it](http://giovani.camera.it)) is dedicated to the youngest citizens and provides, among other things, useful information to those wishing to participate in the competitions that the Chamber organises for students from all branches and levels of education, in order to get the younger generations closer to institutions and make them aware of the importance of active participation in democratic life. In particular, "Training Days at Montecitorio" are held from October to May for pupils in their final two years of secondary school who have participated in the relevant competition. During the training days, students carry out a simulation activity of parliamentary work, meet Deputies and members of the Bureau, and participate in a guided tour of Palazzo Montecitorio and the Chamber's Library. Anyone wishing to visit the parliament building

can attend the Open-door day at Montecitorio, which offers visitors a guided tour of the Chamber, the Transatlantic and the Chamber's reception rooms, usually every first Sunday of the month from October to June.

The opening of Palazzo Montecitorio and the other buildings that form part of the Chamber of Deputies' complex of premises attracts about 300,000 visitors a year, including 70,000 school pupils.

The Library of the Chamber of Deputies, which was renamed in honour of Nilde Iotti in 2019, is open to the public. It contains more than one million published works and, together with the Library of the Senate, forms one part of the Joint Parliamentary Library.

The Historical Archives, which can also be consulted online, preserve the original documents produced by the Chamber of Deputies from its origins to the present day.

The "Luce" portal of the Chamber of Deputies contains a photographic and audio-visual archive, which includes all the digital records of the political and parliamentary history of Italy.

*Detail of pneumatic  
post tubes*

# EU-related and international activities

## **IN FOCUS**

Most of the general provisions governing Italy's participation in the formation and implementation of European Union legislation and policies are laid out in Law 234/2012 and in parliamentary Rules of Procedure. Other related provisions are included in European treaties, specifically the Lisbon Treaty, in force since 1 December 2009, which accords national parliaments certain participatory powers in the EU decision-making process.

## **EU-related activities**

The Chamber of Deputies' activities intersect with those of the European Union in three main areas.

First, the Chamber participates in the framing of EU legislation and policies. To this effect, each House is convened ahead of meetings of the European Council to listen to the communications of the President of the Council of Ministers and to vote on possible policy-setting instruments. In addition to this, Standing Committees examine proposals for European regulations or directives of interest to them, and set out guidelines for the government that can be transmitted directly to the European Commission and the European Parliament as part of the political dialogue. Furthermore, the Chamber maintains direct relations with the institutions of the European Union through meetings and hearings of their representatives.

The second area of activity of the Chamber at

the European level includes cooperation with the European Parliament and the national parliaments of Member States, mainly through participation in conferences and inter-parliamentary meetings.

The third area relates to the implementation of EU legislation at the national level, particularly through the annual approval of a European law and a European delegation law.

## **International activities**

As political challenges take on an increasingly cross-border dimension, so the international activities of Parliaments have become increasingly relevant. Cooperation between parliaments of different countries and with international organizations aims to promote democracy, human rights, dialogue between cultures as well as sustainable development, with a view to strengthening global peace, stability and security.



All the bodies of the Chamber of Deputies engage in regular relations with their counterparts in other countries, so that lawmakers can broaden their experience, enrich their knowledge and benefit from the sharing of parliamentary best practices.

The Chamber of Deputies sends MPs as delegates to several international parliamentary assemblies: the Council of Europe, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Central European Initiative and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Union for the Mediterranean, which consist of delegations representing all respective Member States. The Chamber has also joined the Inter-Parliamentary Union, which includes Parliaments from all over the world.

*Horseman's Room*









clement. The architect Ernesto Basile was therefore tasked with building an extension to the parliament building, which he did by constructing behind the original palace a whole new building made of travertine and red brick and surmounted by four towers. The work was completed in 1918. The graceful interior of the new building is remarkable for the refined Art Nouveau style that characterises the architecture and decorative details.

## Art in Montecitorio

Montecitorio houses a wealth of artistic treasures: it has more than a thousand separate works consisting of paintings, sculptures, prints, tapestries, and archaeological relics. Perhaps the best known work is the great frieze by Giulio Aristide Sartorio, an allegorical depiction of the history of Italian civilization that unfolds across a canvas 105 meters long and 4 meters high, which runs above the public galleries around the entire perimeter of the Hall.

*Detail of Giulio Aristide  
Sartorio's frieze*

# Inside the Palace

## The Plenary Hall

A masterpiece of the Italian Art Nouveau 'Liberty' style, the Plenary Hall is a semi-circular hall where the Chamber of Deputies holds its sittings and MPs from both Houses convene whenever Parliament meets in joint session. All the architectural, decorative and design elements of Ernesto Basile and the artists who collaborated with him are still intact. The Plenary Hall was inaugurated on 20 November 1918 by the then President of the Chamber, Giuseppe Marcora, to coincide with a celebration of victory in the Great War.

In addition to Sartorio's frieze and the velarium, one of the most noteworthy artworks in the room is Davide Calandra's great bronze panel representing the "Glorification of the Savoyard Dynasty".

## The velarium of the Plenary

The elegant stained glass and oak velarium that forms the ceiling of the Plenary Hall is by Giovanni Beltrami and was designed by Ernesto Basile.





## Giulio Aristide Sartorio's frieze

One of the greatest masterpieces of Palazzo Montecitorio is the frieze running along the walls of the Plenary Hall, which was painted by Giulio Aristide Sartorio between 1908 and 1912.



## The Transatlantic

The famous lobby area outside the Plenary Hall is called the Transatlantic, on account of its resemblance to the enormous hall-like spaces that were such a feature of ocean liners of the early twentieth century. The wooden furnishings and ceiling, like many other wooden furnishings in the building, are the work of the Palermo-based Ducrot company, which followed Basile's Art Nouveau designs. Also known as the "Hall of Lost Steps", this is where MPs and journalists meet between one sitting and another.

## Courtyard

Under Carlo Fontana's original plan, the courtyard was a semi-circular space. In 1871, the first Plenary Hall was erected inside the courtyard. After Ernesto Basile was commissioned to extend the parliament building, the courtyard was refashioned into its current square shape.



## Green Room

This room, which is adjacent to the Transatlantic and is dedicated to newspaper reading, finds its unifying element in the green colour of the upholstery, the chairs and the pairs of glass and brass lamps placed on the tables, while a skylight graced by floral decorations and made by the Beltrami glassworks in Milan, filters opalescent light throughout the room.





## Pigeonhole Room

The wood, glass and metal pigeonholes designed by Ernesto Basile and assigned to each Deputy, from which the room takes its name, contain the mail addressed to each Member of the Chamber.



## The Legislative Archive

The archive, located on the first floor of Palazzo Montecitorio, in the immediate vicinity of the Plenary Hall, takes care of the collection of parliamentary acts and their distribution to the bodies of the Chamber, the Plenary and Committees.

## Presidents' Gallery

This is a broad corridor on the same floor as the Plenary Hall, displaying a series of portraits of the Presidents of Italian parliaments from the days before unification, Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies of the Kingdom of Italy, and Presidents of the Chamber of Deputies of the Republic of Italy.



## Hall of the She-wolf

The hall owes its name to a bronze copy, placed just opposite the entrance, of a sculpture that has become a symbol of the city of Rome, the Capitoline She-wolf, which was donated to the Chamber in the late 1920s. It is a large rectangular hall, paved with polychrome marble and decorated with fine 16th-century Florentine and Flemish tapestries.

Here on 10 June 1946, the Court of Cassation proclaimed the results of the referendum held on 2 June on the institutional form of the State. The original of the minutes that were read that day is still displayed today in one of the two cases placed next to the She-wolf: a plaque, placed in the room, commemorates the event.



## Queen's Hall

This large reception room combines in a single room the ornamental motifs characteristic of Ernesto Basile's interior architecture: the red and Botticino marble panelling around its entire perimeter, the geometric designs of the Yellow Siena marble diamond-shaped floor and the Slavonian oak ceiling, as well as the floral lines of the three wrought-iron chandeliers. The name derives from a custom dating back to the monarchical period, according to which on the occasion of the Speech of the Crown, that is, when the King inaugurated with his own speech the sessions that marked the business of the Houses of Parliament, the Queen waited here for the start of the ceremony, which she then attended from the adjacent royal gallery.

## Women's Hall

Inaugurated in 2016, the Women's Hall, located on the second floor of Palazzo Montecitorio, houses portraits of the 21 women Deputies elected to the Constituent Assembly, the women mayors elected between the spring and fall of 1946, and the women who first held the highest offices in the institutions of the Republic of Italy.



## Aldo Moro Room

Formerly known as the Yellow Room, by virtue of the prevailing colour of the upholstery and furnishings, this room was named after Aldo Moro on the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the barbaric assassination of the Christian Democratic statesman. It is an elegant reception room in which paintings from the Chamber's artistic heritage are displayed in rotation, together with the large canvas attributed to Veronese and his school, depicting *The Marriage at Cana*, which was recently restored.



## Horseman's Room

The Horseman's Room, decorated in the Rococo style, takes its name from the large 18th-century painting of the Modenese school which portrays the Marquis Bonifacio Rangoni on horseback. The room, whose walls are entirely covered in silk damask, is furnished with precious gilded furniture from the eighteenth century and paintings from the same period. The room is used to welcome visiting dignitaries who are guests of the President and, in particular, foreign delegations.





## The Corridor of Busts

The Corridor of Busts connects the main reception rooms on the second floor and is one of the points of access to the Palace's Art Nouveau wing. Since the early twentieth century, this passageway has been lined with marble busts of the main figures of the Risorgimento, including Cavour, Garibaldi and Mazzini, as well as of the exponents of political and parliamentary life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



## Globe Room

The Globe Room gets its name from the ancient globe located in the room. It still contains the original metal shelves of the Library, which used to be housed here. The room is equipped with multimedia equipment and is mainly destined for the use of Parliamentary Committees, which hold their most important sittings here (such as those for the examination of the budget law). It is also used by Committees sitting in joint session (i.e. meetings of two or more Committees at once), and by Committees with a large number of participants.

# The premises of the Chamber of Deputies

## Other parliamentary premises around Montecitorio

In addition to Palazzo Montecitorio, the Chamber of Deputies conducts its business in other buildings of considerable historical and artistic value.

The ancient complex of Santa Maria sopra Minerva on Via del Seminario is the seat of the rooms of Bicameral Committees, Committees of Inquiry, the "Nilde Iotti" Library, and the Historical Archive.

Parliamentary groups operate out of the Building of Parliamentary Groups (Palazzo dei Gruppi, on Via Uffici del Vicario), while the complex of Santa Maria in Campo Marzio in Vicolo Valdina (Piazza Campo Marzio), which dates back to early medieval times, houses the offices of MPs and, among other things, hosts exhibitions and conferences. Palazzo Theodoli-Bianchelli (on Via del Parlamento) houses more MPs' offices as well as some administrative departments. The former Banco di Napoli building (on Via del Parlamento) contains several administrative departments and offices.

*Cloister of the complex  
of Santa Maria in Campo Marzio*





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