



Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament

PRESS CONFERENCE with Hannes Swoboda
Tuesday 16 April at 10.10 LOW N-1/201

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Hannes Swoboda

Situation in Hungary

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Wednesday 17 April 2013

During the upcoming plenary session of the European Parliament we will hold a debate about the current situation in Hungary. We requested this debate because we are very concerned about the recent adoption of the so-called 4th amendment to the Hungarian constitution. This could have a very substantial impact on the lives of the people in Hungary. Homeless people, LGBT persons, students seeking to make a life for themselves abroad, and eventually absolutely everybody when it comes to political advertisement, is or will be impacted by the recent legislation. The European Parliament is continuing its evaluation of the situation in Hungary within the LIBE committee, but in the meantime the Hungarian government should address these tangible concerns about fundamental European values and principles.



Udo Bullmann

Capital Requirements Directive / Regulation / shadow rapporteur

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Tuesday 16 April 2013

The Capital Requirements Directive IV package implements the international banking regulatory framework Basel III in the EU. As of 2014, banks will have to meet stricter capital and liquidity requirements and comply with stronger corporate governance rules. The S&D Group has successfully proposed and defended - throughout the negotiations - important changes to the Commission proposal. We have ensured that capital requirements, liquidity and leverage rules will be differentiated for different banks according to the level of risk involved in their activities. Bonuses for bank employees will generally be capped at the level of fixed salaries and banks will have to disclose crucial information concerning taxes paid, subsidies received and profits realised. We have also ensured that the new rules will not adversely affect the financing of the real economy.



Zita Gurmai

Equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services / rapporteur

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Monday 15 April 2013

Directive 2004/113 is the first European directive to address gender-based discrimination outside the labour market. The European Commission has unfortunately still not presented its summary report on its transposition, while the 2011 ruling of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) now requires the insurance industry to adopt gender-neutral pricing. This report calls for a uniform and transparent implementation of the directive and emphasises that this crisis cannot be used as an excuse to either reduce its scope or minimise the fight against gender discriminations. We also call for a revision of the directive in order to put an end to the legal uncertainty stemming from the ECJ's ruling.



Raimon Obiols

2012 Progress Report on Turkey / shadow rapporteur

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Wednesday 17 April 2013

It has been 7 years since accession negotiations began between the EU and Turkey. During this time, the S&D Group has maintained a clear and positive approach, focusing our policy on the need for political reforms, fundamental freedoms and the independence of the judiciary. Taking into account the fact that acquired agreements must be respected, we are in favour of pursuing accession negotiations and opening new chapter. We also support Commissioner Füle's Positive Agenda as a welcome initiative which has the potential to enhance, not substitute, accession negotiations.



Libor Roucek

2012 Comprehensive Monitoring Report on Croatia / rapporteur

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Wednesday 17 April 2013

Croatia is to become the 28th member of the EU in July 2013. In its final report on the country, the European Parliament welcomes Croatia's imminent accession, and reaffirms its confidence in Croatia's democracy and social market, in addition to the country's willingness to assume the obligations of membership. The report notes that Croatia has completed the ten priority tasks set by the Commission. However, it also encourages the authorities in Zagreb to continue the reforming process beyond accession, particularly as regards the rule of law, so that Croatian citizens can fully benefit from EU membership. Equally importantly, Croatia's accession signifies the enduring strength of the EU's enlargement policy, and should positively affect the Western Balkan region as a whole.



**Liem Hoang
Ngoc**

2011 Annual report of the European Central Bank / shadow rapporteur

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Tuesday 16 April 2013

This report presents the European Parliament's assessment of the European Central Bank's actions in 2011. That was the year in which the bank purchased 137 billion in Eurozone countries' government bonds, in an attempt to alleviate the impact of the crisis. Although this strategy proved invaluable, the substantial profit made by the ECB during this period has raised issues of economic efficiency and fairness. The S&D has been instrumental in pressing the bank for greater transparency and accountability in this report, to be voted on at the April plenary session.



**Edit
Herczog**

Parliament's estimates of revenue and expenditure for the 2014 financial year / shadow rapporteur

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Tuesday 16 April 2013

We strongly defend the European Parliament's ability to represent EU citizens, and its capability to fulfil its function, as defined in the treaty on the functioning of the EU. In solidarity with the difficult economic and budgetary conditions suffered by the member states, the S&D supports the ongoing organisational reforms. It also calls on the administration to make further efforts to compensate for the exceptional one-year additional expenses which are due to the election of a new Parliament in 2014.

It should be remembered that, following an S&D initiative, members' allowances have been frozen at 2011 levels until the end of the current legislature and travel costs have been revised down. Furthermore, mission allowances for staff have not been indexed since 2007.

Additional structural reforms have already been agreed in the Parliament, some of which have applied since 2011 and are estimated to allow for approximately EUR 29 million savings per year. This reflects the efforts to partially compensate the funding required for the increased competences, the financial impact of the European elections, and the costs related to the accession of Croatia, which must be met over a full financial year for the first time in 2014.



**Ole
Christensen**

Technical and control measures in the Skagerrak / shadow rapporteur

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A regionally agreed record between EU and Norway includes a discard ban for multiple species of fish in the sea of Skagerrak. One of the central aspects of the proposal puts in place the obligation for vessels of 12 metres overall length or more to install equipment to collect and transfer information. Overall, this legislative proposal sets out landing obligations, technical measures and control and inspection rules. The provisions laid down in this proposal are specific to the sea of Skagerrak. However, experience in this area can provide valuable feedback for the general discussion on eradicating discards in EU fisheries - a central element in reform of the common fisheries policy.



**Antigoni
Papadopoulou**

European statistics on demography / shadow rapporteur

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Thursday 18 April 2013

The report on European statistics on demography is not only technical but also a highly controversial and political file due to its link to qualified majority voting in Council.

This regulation proposed by the European Commission aims to establish a common framework for the systematic production of Union statistics based on demography, harmonising of the collection, compilation, processing, and transmission of statistics by Member States on population and vital events.

The regulation lays down the same law throughout the Union, which is directly applicable, and offers sufficient legal certainty.

Such a harmonisation at Union level will certainly improve the current quality of statistical data fulfilling coherence and comparability requirements, based on common statistical concepts and operational objectives, without entailing additional burdens on Member States.

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