



Plenary Update

**Socialists and Democrats Group
In the European Parliament
Strasbourg Plenary Session, July 2017**

**PRESS
CONFERENCE
with Gianni Pittella
Tuesday at 10.10
LOW N-1/201**

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Our Priorities

- ▶ *Wed, 5* **Conclusions of the European Council of 22 and 23 June 2017 and preparation of the G20 Summit of 7 and 8 July 2017**

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**PITTELLA
Gianni**

A progressive choice for the future of Europe

Social Europe: Europeans act together to improve working conditions, reduce poverty and social inequalities, provide high-quality education and training to all, and speed up the process of weaker countries catching up with stronger ones in terms of economic performance, wages and real incomes. The principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights must be turned into reality through adequate legislation, policy co-ordination and financial instruments.

A European investment strategy for sustainable development: Sustainable prosperity, with more and better jobs, thanks to investment in people, continuous innovation and a much more efficient use of natural resources and energy. Healthy food and flourishing countryside thanks to environmentally friendly agriculture. Workers, consumers, public health and the environment are protected in the single market. The financial sector is regulated to ensure stability and to channel capital into sustainable development, in line with the Paris Agreement on climate.

Economic & monetary union: A fiscal capacity for the Eurozone is set up, overseen by the European Parliament, to help weaker regions catch up and to cushion economic shocks. The missing elements of the banking union are put in place so that banks in peripheral countries are not disadvantaged and banking crises can be solved without putting national governments in trouble.

Tax justice: The EU clamps down on tax fraud, fixes legal loopholes, closes down tax havens and improves transparency to put an end to unethical business practices. Common European action against tax evasion and tax avoidance ensures that national governments have enough resources for public investment and social services.

Paris Agreement: No one can imagine facing the worldwide challenges with protectionism and isolationism. Not even the United States. The European Union remains strongly committed to the full implementation of the Paris Agreement and are not open for re-negotiating the agreement. The EU must remain the leader in the fight against climate change and enhance cooperation with international partners, like Canada, China, and India, as well as the most vulnerable countries and islands who are hit hardest. We are especially interested in working more closely with non-state actors at EU and worldwide level, especially with progressive cities and states in the US. The S&Ds fully support the creation of a platform where cities, states and progressive corporations can exchange ideas, best practices and policies, and they will become a major driver of more ambitious climate goals.

- ▶ *Tues, 4* **Preparation of the Commission Work Programme for 2018**

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**RODRIGUES
Maria Joao**

The debate on the EU's work programme for 2018 will force each parliamentary group to show what it really stands for. At a time when European citizens worry about social inequalities, wild globalisation, left-behind towns and new security risks, the S&Ds are putting forward a strong set of proposals for effective European solutions. We offer a vision of Europe doing much better together on priorities people care about. We have a plan for the future of European integration that reconciles the North, South, East and West - a progressive path for Europe where nobody is left behind. By contrast, EPP, ALDE and ECR are teaming up behind a weak agenda for Europe that would only benefit big business, with weak social and environmental standards and no serious action against tax avoidance or inequalities. This is a fight for the future of Europe! The S&Ds are leading the fight for a STRONG EUROPE THAT WORKS FOR THE MANY.

- ▶ *Wed, 5* **2016 Report on Turkey**

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PIRI Kati

The continuation of the state of emergency has disproportionate negative effects on Turkish society and the arbitrary arrest of thousands of citizens, including parliamentarians and mayors, is of utmost concern to us. The S&D Group has always been a fierce supporter of Turkey's accession process. However, it's clear that the constitutional-reform package is not in line with the EU membership criteria. The S&D Group calls for the formal suspension of the accession talks if the constitutional amendments are implemented unchanged. We expect the Turkish government to take the Venice Commission recommendations seriously, as well as the fact that half the Turkish population voted against the changes in the referendum.

- ▶ *Tues, 4* **Conclusion of the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement**

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This Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA), which the EU signed with Cuba in December 2016, is a highly sophisticated, necessary and appropriate instrument, which will provide a framework for the relations that the EU and its member states already maintain with the Republic of Cuba.

The overwhelming majority with which the EP's foreign affairs committee endorsed the PDCA shows that it is committed to dialogue and convinced that this is the best way to advance relations between the EU and Cuba. The PDCA is a very good agreement. I wish that every agreement signed by the EU with third countries was as clear and well-structured as this one. The PDCA is also very demanding on human rights, through a dialogue

which has already begun to work.

This agreement puts an end to 20 years of distance between the EU and Cuba, since the so-called 'common position' had been largely overcome by the reality of bilateral agreements and exchanges maintained by the member states during these years. Cuba is a country of great strategic interest to the EU. Europe needed to establish this agreement to complete the map of its relations with Latin America. Cuba is no longer an exception.



VALENCIANO
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► *Tues, 4* **Tax transparency: public disclosure of income tax information by multinational undertakings**

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On Tuesday, the so-called public country-by-country of tax-relevant information reporting will be voted in plenary. The purpose of this law is very clear: we want to increase corporate transparency by enabling citizens and civil-society organisations worldwide to follow the money. The proposal will ensure that in the future taxes are paid where profits are made, helping to provide adequate revenue for public services and benefiting the wider economy. As rapporteurs from ECON and JURI, we pushed hard for increased corporate and tax transparency, but the EPP, ECR and ALDE watered down the ambitious compromise in the committee votes. This vote in plenary will be crucial to fight tax evasion and profit shifting and to close any loophole leading to the avoidance of reporting obligations. The Liberals and Conservatives need to decide if they are on the side of European citizens or the side of big business.



BAYET
Hugues



REGNER
Evelyn

► *Mon, 3* **Working conditions and precarious employment**

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Precarious employment is on the rise in Europe, leaving more and more workers without job security, sufficient remuneration or social protection. All workers should have decent working conditions and a living wage. Some forms of employment such as zero-hours contracts are simply unacceptable. We also need to ensure that legislation on digitally-driven forms of employment is up-to-date so that no worker is left unprotected by labour legislation.



SIMON Siôn

► *Tues, 4* **Fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law**

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The EP is to finally approve the Directive on the fight against fraud to the Union's financial interests by means of criminal law. The Directive establishes the criminal offences of fraud, corruption and related offences at Union level and lays down a minimum-maximum sanction of four years imprisonment for those offences. In addition, the Directive will provide the criminal law framework for the European Public Prosecutors Office (EPPO). That office would have competence for the criminal offences established at Union level by the Protection of the Union's Financial Interests (PIF Directive). The PIF Directive will be a key instrument to fight corruption, including EU fraud to VAT, and will help to revert to the productive economy the resources alienated from it by fraud. This is especially important in a moment where economic recovery after the financial crisis requires as many means and resources as possible.



LÓPEZ
AGUILAR
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► *Mon, 3* **Macro-financial assistance to the Republic of Moldova**

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Through this instrument, the EU will provide a financial support of 100 million Euro (60 million in the form of a loan and 40 million in the form of a grant) to help the Republic of Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, to cover its external financing needs in 2017-2018. The support is linked to the country's commitment to sound public finance management, the fight against corruption and money laundering, reform of the public administration, an independent judiciary and the implementation of the Association Agreement. The amendments proposed by the European Parliament, following consensus-building work by the S&D Rapporteur Sorin Moisa, and accepted by the Council and the Commission, have bolstered the conditionalities attached to the package, creating incentives for vital reforms to take place in Moldova, improving governance and strengthening rule of law.



MOISA Ionel-
Sorin

► *Tues, 4* **Towards an EU strategy for international cultural relations**

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Culture can play an important role in the foreign policy of the EU. Cultural co-operation fights against stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue, open mindedness, dignity and mutual respect. Intercultural dialogue can contribute in avoiding conflicts and to promoting reconciliation inside and among countries. Culture can play an important role in facing global challenges such as the integration of refugees, the fight against violent radicalisation and the safeguard of the cultural heritage worldwide. At the same time, culture can also be a tool able to produce important social and economic benefits inside and outside the EU. All these reasons are fundamental to put culture at the basis of European foreign policy.



COSTA Silvia

► *Wed, 5* **EU action for sustainability**

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The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) impact on every aspect of the EU's work. The SDGs represent not

only a blueprint for a better society and world, but are essential elements - deliverable through practical and measurable action - for achieving better and more equal health outcomes, greater well-being among citizens, higher overall prosperity, action against climate change and the conservation of the environment for future generations. The report includes a number of proposals aiming to ensure that adherence to the SDGs becomes a key feature of proposed initiatives taking place across all areas of the Union's work programmes.



DANCE Seb

- *Thurs, 6* **HIV, TB and HCV epidemics in Europe on the rise. Oral question and resolution** claudiuciprian.tanasescu@ep.europa.eu +33(0)3 88 1 75790

HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and viral hepatitis are significant health threats in the EU and often affect vulnerable and overlapping populations. The S&D Group has been pushing for a Parliament resolution on this topic for over a year and also succeeded in adding an oral question to the Commission on the agenda next week. The EU Action Plan on HIV/AIDS expired at the end of 2016 and as yet there have been no proposals for a renewal or replacement. We call for a new integrated EU strategy on HIV/AIDS, TB and viral hepatitis, including prevention and which gives patients access to better treatment



**TĂNĂSESCU
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