



Plenary Update

Group of the Progressive Alliance
of Socialists and Democrats
in the European Parliament
March II Plenary Session

PRESS
CONFERENCE
with Gianni Pittella
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Our Priorities

► *Wed 15* **Conclusions of the European Council meeting of 9 and 10 March including Rome Declaration**

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PITTELLA
Gianni

Future of Europe: The Socialists and Democrats only see one option: to work together as Europeans and do much more, because together we are stronger. We cannot accept the sacrifice of a common European future as a result of the short-sightedness of the Council or because of a fear of possible outcomes of national elections.

There is so much left to do: we need a strong social pillar to protect our citizens. A European fiscal capacity. We must complete the European Monetary Union. And build a sustainable Europe capable of fighting climate change and creating jobs and growth. We must combat tax fraud. And the project of a common European army is now more important than ever.

We firmly believe the European Union's integration path should be about progress together on one single track. Nobody should be intentionally left behind and nobody should envisage a Europe with different tracks to create a first-class Europe opposed to a second-class Union. But at the same time, nobody should have the right to veto the intentions expressed by some member states to reinforce their co-operation.

West Balkans: The Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament strongly support a European future for the West Balkan states and consider that Europe's enlargement policy strengthens stability and democracy in this region and must be maintained. Challenges remain and all candidate countries should continue and accelerate their efforts to apply the *acquis communautaire* (the body of EU laws and standards already in place across the EU) and meet the Copenhagen criteria.

Additional efforts must be made to implement reforms, particularly in the area of the judiciary, the rule of law, freedom of expression, rights of minorities and the fight against corruption. In some cases the lack of progress in EU accession risks of undermining the effectiveness of EU conditionality and declining in democratic standards.

Migration: The first priority must be to save the lives of people drowning in the Mediterranean and tackle the scourge of people smuggling. Member States must also get serious about resettling refugees fairly across Europe. The S&D Group is committed to a positive approach on the issues of legal migration and integration, despite rising xenophobia and anti-immigrant rhetoric from the right wing. We strongly believe that the EU cannot remain silent and watch as tragedies unfold on the high seas in the Mediterranean but must ensure co-operation and solidarity define our policy people in distress receive the protection they need.

Since the start of this parliamentary term, the Group has been reiterating its call for the EU to adopt a holistic approach to migration which covers all of the interlinked elements — from solidarity and sharing responsibility fairly between countries, to tackling criminal traffickers and smugglers, and the role of Frontex and EASO (the European Asylum Support Office).

► *Wed 15* **Constitutional, legal and institutional implications of a Common Security and Defence Policy: possibilities offered by the Lisbon Treaty**

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GUERRERO
SALOM
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With the approval of this report, we clarify some legal and institutional implications for a common security and defence policy. It calls for a democratic scrutiny and supervision of the European Defence Union, underpinning the role of the European Parliament. But not only this, the report also asks to elaborate an EU White Book on Security and Defence, to strengthen global governance and improve it, to promote the reform of the United Nations, to set up a European intelligence and an Anti-Terrorism Investigation agency and to accomplish with the export policy of EU member States. Finally, the report enhances the EU-NATO partnership, the funding of the CSDP and it redefines the internal and external security dimension of the CSDP.

We have to utilise the Lisbon Treaty to its full extent, this is only feasible with clear EU leadership and political will, connected with the future of the EU. The White Paper opens a process which will be composed of the several documents given by the European Commission.

► *Mon 13* **Long-term shareholder engagement and corporate governance statement**

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COFFERATI
Sergio
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The outcome of the trialogue negotiations on the Shareholders' Rights Directive is very positive. The measures agreed upon will contribute to steer investments towards a more long-term oriented approach and will ensure more transparency for listed companies and investors. The Directive will guarantee stronger controls over the pay of listed companies' directors, including a vote by shareholders on the remuneration policy (the so-called 'say on pay'), a closer link between directors' pay and companies' performances in the long term and full transparency on the remuneration awarded to individual directors. The directive will also contribute to foster shareholder engagement in the long-term, by setting effective transparency provisions for institutional investors and their asset managers.

► *Tues 14* **Circular economy - Packaging and packaging waste**

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We are committed to leading a transition towards an economic model that reduces waste and promotes re-use, efficiency, durability and recycling. We cannot continue with the existing paradigm. Around 600 million tonnes of waste are just thrown away in Europe, when they could be reinvested in the economy. It is a matter of sustainability, efficiency and ethics.

The circular economy package provide the appropriate measures that can help a change in attitude by making sure that very little goes to waste whilst protecting our environment, reduce resource loss and providing new economic opportunities whilst creating new jobs.



BONAFE
Simona

► *Mon 13* **Fundamental rights implications of big data**

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With the report on the impact of Big Data on Fundamental Rights, Parliament wants to stress that the opportunities of big data can only be fully enjoyed by citizens and institutions if there is public trust in these technologies and the way they collect and process data about our lives. Big data analytics pose specific challenges for fundamental rights and raise concerns over discrimination and security. We need to address these risks with specific guidelines, more transparency and algorithmic accountability. We have a strong data protection framework in the EU, but tackling these issues in will require cooperation between the private and public sectors, law enforcement authorities and independent supervisory authorities. This is certainly an issue that Parliament will continue to look at.



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The Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (the S&D Group) is the second largest political group in the European Parliament with 189 members from all 28 EU member states.

We stand for an inclusive European society based on principles of solidarity, equality, diversity, freedom and fairness. We promote social justice, jobs and growth, consumer rights, sustainable development, financial market reforms and human rights to create a stronger and more democratic Europe and a better future for all citizens.

About the S&D Group

