



PARLIAMENTARY HIGHLIGHTS

March II Plenary Session

KEY ISSUES

Solidarity, Jobs and Economic Governance

Ahead of the EU Spring Summit (25 - 26 March), MEPs sent Wednesday clear messages to the European Council.

S&D leader Martin Schulz called on the European Council to send a strong 'sign to the international markets to stop speculation, by showing that the Eurozone sticks together and can solve its own problems'. He stressed that European solidarity with Greece 'is an act of economic common sense'. 'This is not about giving the money from European tax payers to Greece, but instead enabling Greece to borrow money at the same price other countries do'. Otherwise, 'the results of Greece recovery measures will go directly to the pockets of speculators worldwide'.

'We need a smart balance between responsible fiscal policy on the one hand and continued labour market support on the other', said S&D Vice-President Stephen Hughes. According to recent figures, if the emergency exit strategies agreed with the Commission are followed 'an additional 4.5 million European citizens will needlessly be in the unemployment queues by the end of 2013'. Therefore, 'we call for a two-year moratorium on withdrawal of support measures and we are proposing a new European mechanism for financial stability'. 'We must prevent that a hasty exit strategy will lead to further social inequalities and the dismantling of the social model', added Pervenche Berès, S&D Chair of the Employment committee. 'We expect a message of solidarity towards Greece and a message of responsibility regarding economic governance from the European Council', she said.

Eurozone issues, economic governance and monetary policy were also on the agenda Thursday for the annual debate on the Euro area, in the presence of ECB president Jean-Claude Trichet. Read the reports: [ECB annual report](#) - [Annual statement on Euro area](#)

In SHORT

Priorities for Budget 2011 - Parliament launched the budgetary procedure 2011 by insisting that there must be an in-depth review and revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework (2007-2013). 'We need adequate resources, concrete action to implement future strategies, notably the EU2020, and flexible budgetary procedures to respond to a world of rapid change', said S&D Shadow Francesca Balzani. 'Deciding on our priorities is about spending the money in the best possible way', added S&D Shadow Derek Vaughan. Parliament voted by 558 votes to 48 with 16 abstentions to approve the [resolution on the main part of the EU budget](#), managed by the Commission; the [resolution on the administrative budgets of the other EU institutions](#) was approved by a show of hands.

EU Sea border patrols – EU guidelines on search, rescue and disembarkation of migrants at sea passed through Parliament. 'Every year 1500-2000 people die at sea on the EU's borders, especially in the Southern Mediterranean. This vote gives Member States common rules on cooperation and sharing of responsibilities for intervention and rescue at sea, at the same time requesting that the guidelines be integrated as soon as

possible in a legislative procedure', said S&D Michael Cashman. After being the only political Group which supported the Guidelines in the Civil Liberties Committee, our Group score a victory in the Plenary vote, ensuring that the Commission's proposal went through.

Citizen's Initiative - The Lisbon Treaty gives one million EU citizens the right to launch initiatives to change EU law. 'This direct access of citizens to the European Parliament reinforces the legitimacy of this Parliament', said Ramón Jauregui, S&D Coordinator on Constitutional Affairs. Parliament was debating how to put the Treaty provision into effect, ahead of the Commission's adoption next week of detailed proposals. Parliament and EU governments will then have to reach an agreement on how exactly it will work.

Developing countries - Despite Conservatives' attempts to block two key S&D proposals of the report on the [effects of the global financial and economic crisis on developing countries](#), S&D Rapporteur Enrique Guerrero succeeded in getting the support of the Parliament for a tax on financial transactions as a fair contribution from the financial sector to global social justice and for the protection of sexual and reproductive rights for women. The report was adopted by 283 votes to 278, with 15 abstentions.

MEPs also voted on [agricultural product quality policy](#), the [Second European Roma Summit](#) and adopted a [Recommendation to the Council on the 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly](#). MEPs further adopted a resolution recommending the approval of Vitor Constâncio as ECB Vice-President and approved 10 members of the Court of Auditors.

APPROACHING...

- 19 - 22 April - Plenary Session in Strasbourg;

Monthly e-Newsletter edited by the External Coordination Unit with the Secretariat of the Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament. For subscriptions, comments or any questions please e-mail: S-D.ParliamentaryHighlights@europarl.europa.eu or call + 32 4 95 70 59 94