



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

PRESS CONFERENCE with Hannes Swoboda
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Debate on the future of the European Union

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Tuesday 15 January 2013



Hannes Swoboda

The outlook for 2013 indicates that we could see another lost year if we do not change our policy dramatically and invest more in growth. Europe is facing a threefold crisis - economic, political and social - and we must take action now. We need a more credible path for budget consolidation, because without growth and new jobs, budget deficits will rather grow than be reduced. As recommended in Europe we must find a way to combine budget consolidation with investment in growth and jobs. It's time to act and to show that an alternative, more socially just Europe is possible. With regard to the social pact, which our Group has called for the last year, the Council has asked Herman Van Rompuy to make proposals for the social dimension of the EU. While a positive development, we must now ensure that it is properly implemented and followed up with specific measures in 2013.

Youth guarantee / Rapporteur

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Monday 14 January 2013



Pervenche Berès

Introducing a youth guarantee is a priority, ensuring that EU citizens and residents under 25 and recent graduates under 30 are guaranteed the offer of a good-quality job, continued education or apprenticeship within four months of becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. Financed through specific funding, this tool will help combat youth unemployment and strengthen solidarity between countries and between generations. The Commission's initiative to propose a Council Recommendation on a Youth Guarantee should be supported and the European Parliament urges the Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs Council (EPSCO) to agree on it in February 2013.

Information and consultation of workers, anticipation and management of restructuring / Rapporteur

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Monday 14 January 2013



Alejandro Cercas

The S&D Group is glad that there will finally be a European strategy to manage restructuring processes in a socially responsible way. Experience has shown us that well-managed restructuring can improve the future of industries, workers, regions and cities affected by technological change, the economic crisis or globalisation. The key factors are anticipating change, associating all the sectors affected and – above all – giving a leading role to social dialogue. The European Commission now has to come forward with a legislative proposal that minimises social costs, paying special attention to the most affected sectors and regions. Europe can and must do it better: Restructuring can be done in a more intelligent and long-term way.

Urban redevelopment as contribution to economic growth / Rapporteur

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Andrea Cozzolino

The Cohesion Policy program for 2014-2020 will define a structural approach to urban regeneration issues, in order to develop actions of territorial governments which ensure social sustainability. Urban fabric has to be considered as a whole, but we need to focus on integrated interventions that go beyond simplistic notions of "centre and periphery" and "urban and rural". In addition, the cohesion fund management will ensure development and growth in line with the specificities of territories, through active citizenship and involvement of citizens in decision-making. Last but not least, the new cohesion policy will help public authorities to face poor housing conditions, also introducing a new model of European social housing.

Role of territorial development in cohesion policy / Rapporteur

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Derek Vaughan

This report explores the potential mechanisms for bringing different European funding programmes covered by the Common Strategic Framework closer together. An effective, simplified cohesion policy, with a greater emphasis on results and performance, is vitally important. The report welcomes proposals by the European Commission aimed at allowing the integrated delivery of funds. At local and regional level there is overwhelming support for creating more synergies to improve the effectiveness of funds and this report includes some examples of how the European Commission's suggested instruments could be applied to improve performance.



Pino Arlacchi

Recommendations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference regarding the establishment of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction / Rapporteur

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Wednesday 16 January 2013

In the final document of the 2010 non-proliferation treaty (NPT) review conference there is an agreement to hold a conference in 2012 on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Middle East. This was scheduled to take place in December 2012, but regrettably it has been postponed to a later date. The resolution deeply regrets the delay to the conference and strongly urges all parties to arrange it as soon as possible. A WMD-free zone in the Middle East would benefit the region and the world at large. The zone would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and other non-proliferation regimes by reducing the number of states with WMDs. The zone would also eliminate the most dangerous weapons.



María Muñiz de Urquiza

EU Strategy for the Horn of Africa / Shadow Rapporteur

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The challenges faced in the Horn of Africa are wider than the security issues, as initially put forward in the original draft report. The S&D Group's amendments and negotiated compromises has given a global dimension to the European Parliament's position on development and humanitarian aspects, as well as the women's and LGBT rights. On security, while supporting the PSED missions and the enlargement of the mandate of ATALANTA, S&D group included a request on the regulation of the private security companies according to internationally binding standards.



Bernd Lange

Interim agreement establishing a framework for an EC-Eastern and Southern Africa States Economic Partnership Agreement / Shadow Rapporteur

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The interim Economic Partnership Agreement between the EU and Eastern and Southern Africa states provides quota-free access to the EU market for exports from Mauritius, Madagascar, Seychelles and Zimbabwe. In return, these countries will gradually open their markets to European exports over the course of 15 years, with exceptions for certain sensitive products. At the same time, the interim agreement is a stepping stone towards a full Economic Partnership Agreement which will bring trade relations between the EU and the ESA countries into line with World Trade Organisation requirements.



Luigi Berlinguer

Administrative procedure law / Rapporteur

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The draft report to be voted in the January plenary session calls on the Commission to submit a proposal for a regulation on a European Law of Administrative Procedure, in the light of article 298 of the Lisbon Treaty and article 41 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. This should be limited to direct EU administration and be applicable to all of the EU's institutions and areas of activity. The real challenge is to create an open, independent and efficient European administration, giving citizens and legal persons clearer rights and more legal certainty in their relations with the EU administration – and at the same time reinforcing the legitimacy of the European Union. Citizens and businesses are at a disadvantage when they face the seemingly overwhelming power of the EU institutions, agencies, bodies and offices. These rules should therefore promote transparency and accountability, and increase the citizen's confidence in the EU administration.



Georgios Stavrakakis

European Union Solidarity Fund, implementation and application / Shadow rapporteur

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The S&D Group has always been a natural supporter of the Solidarity Fund as it is the EU's main instrument for implementing the principle of solidarity enshrined in the treaties in cases of significant disasters. Our Group has also strongly supported positive measures to minimise bureaucracy in using the fund and to address shortcomings. The Group's goal is a more responsive, flexible and simplified fund that can be mobilised quickly and easily to respond to serious disasters and provide timely relief to citizens in need.

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