



Plenary Update

Group of the Progressive Alliance
of Socialists and Democrats in the
European Parliament
Strasbourg June Session

PRESS
CONFERENCE
with Gianni Pittella
Tuesday at 10.10
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Our Priorities

- **Wed 14** Preparation of the European Council of 22 and 23 June 2017

gianni.pittella@europarl.europa.eu
+33 3 88 1 75159



PITTELLA
Gianni

Migration

For the S&D Group, the EU's first priority must be to save the lives of people drowning in the Mediterranean and tackle people smuggling. The EU needs a migration and refugee policy that puts human rights and people's dignity before any other interests.

We are calling for a properly functioning EU asylum policy, where member states show much greater solidarity, meet their legal obligations and get serious about resettling refugees fairly across Europe.

- **Wed 14** President Trump's decision to withdraw the US from the COP21 climate agreement

kathleen.vanbrempt@europarl.europa.eu
+ 33 3 88 17 5447



VAN
BREMPT
Kathleen

At the S&D Group's request, a debate on President Trump's decision to withdraw the US from the COP21 climate agreement was added to next week's plenary agenda. Signed by 195 countries, the COP21 was the first deal in history to unite the world's nations on tackling climate change and keeping the rise in global temperatures to well below 2° Celsius. Now that the world's second biggest polluter has withdrawn from the agreement, it is time for Europe to reaffirm its commitment to forcefully combatting climate change together with its partners and coming up with new and innovative ways to reach our climate goals.

- **Wed 14** Implementation of the European Fund for Strategic Investments

udo.bullmann@europarl.europa.eu
+ 33 3 88 17 5342



BULLMANN
Udo

Closing the European investment gap must be a top priority for all political forces committed to fostering sustainable growth and quality employment in Europe. The European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI), which was conceived to help fill this gap, is only partly accomplishing its mission though. Too often, EFSI support is granted to projects that could be realised without its support. Its decision-making structures lack transparency and EFSI's activities are overly concentrated on the most highly developed regions of our Union. Against this backdrop, the EFSI implementing report, negotiated by Udo Bullmann together with José Manuel Fernandes (EPP-PT), sends a clear signal against other institutions' attempts at window dressing. In identifying current shortcomings in a clear and straightforward manner, the report defines the Parliament's priorities for EFSI's partial overhaul, which is part of the process of extending the fund and currently being negotiated between the European Council and Parliament.

- **Tues 13** Situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo

marie.arena@europarl.europa.eu
+ 33 3 88 17 5690



ARENA Marie

The Socialists and Democrats in the European Parliament are gravely concerned about the growing violence and political instability in the Democratic Republic of Congo and call for the de-escalation of tensions in the country. The Congolese authorities must work to address the current security and humanitarian crisis, ensuring political stability and full respect for human rights and the Congolese constitution. We strongly believe that respect for democracy, peace and the peaceful transfer of power must now be a priority for all political forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- **Tues 13** 2016 Report on Serbia

tanja.fajon@europarl.europa.eu
+ 33 3 88 17 5493



FAJON Tanja

After several postponements, the 2016 report on Serbia will finally be adopted during the upcoming plenary. It comes at an important moment for Serbia: when the new president – the outgoing prime minister Aleksandar Vučić – is taking up new duties and we are impatiently waiting for the new government to be formed. We are very worried about recent protests following Vučić's victory and inauguration, continuous undermining of media freedom and the fundamental pillars of democracy, and an ever more fearful and frustrated civil society. We, the Socialists and Democrats, strongly believe that the report should give an objective, yet critical if necessary, broad picture of the progress Serbia has made on its EU journey. I sincerely hope this will be the case and in my role as a shadow rapporteur, I am doing my best to ensure a balanced report.

► **Mon 12** Building blocks for a post-2020 EU cohesion policy

kerstin.westphal@europarl.europa.eu

+ 33 3 88 17 5534

An adequate budget, synergies between funds, simplification and visibility are some of the key proposals on how to improve the cohesion policy after 2020. In the report drafted by Kerstin Westphal, MEPs stress that although the existing cohesion policy has mitigated the impact of the recent economic crisis and that of the austerity measures, regional disparities and social inequalities remain large. The report calls for strengthened action in the post-2020 cohesion policy to reduce these disparities and prevent the development of new ones in all types of regions. Cohesion policy is the investment tool par excellence for all European regions to create growth and jobs, and to tackle existing and new challenges. We need to make sure that this continues after 2020 – with an adequate budget, simpler rules, less bureaucracy and with stakeholders involved earlier and better.



WESTPHAL
Kerstin

► **Thurs 15** Cross-border mergers and divisions

enrico.gasbarra@europarl.europa.eu

+ 33 3 88 17 5421

The report represents an important step forward to improve transparency and simplify and better harmonise company law. The report states the need for a new legislative initiative amending the current Cross-border mergers directive and paving the way for a regulated framework for divisions and transfers of company seats. We support such a scenario under the condition that workers' rights are respected, notably by expanding the right to participation, consultation and information in all the stages of companies' governance, as well as with a priority of avoiding all forms of social and fiscal dumping.



GASBARRA
Enrico

► **Tues 13** Energy-efficiency labelling

martina.werner@europarl.europa.eu

+ 33 3 88 17 5782

New energy-efficiency labels will enable consumers to buy low-energy household products and allow them to save electricity and hundreds of euros in energy bills. The overwhelming number of products in the highest efficiency classes no longer reflect the technological advances made in recent years. Furthermore, current labels with different scales from A+++ to G are confusing for consumers. New rules are set to replace these out-dated labels with a unified and clearer A to G scale for most household products. The Socialists and Democrats Group had been pushing for the old labels to be replaced faster, despite resistance from the EPP and some member states who wanted to protect inefficient industries. Under the leadership of the S&Ds, Parliament also pushed for compensating consumers for wrongly labelled products but neither the EU Commission nor Council were willing to compromise on this issue. A public database will give consumers a better tool to compare the energy efficiency of products while a database will strengthen market-surveillance authorities in the member states. If the new rules are adopted in plenary they will apply in all member states as of this summer and most household products will have new labels by the end of 2019.



WERNER
Martina

► **Wed 14** European Agenda for the collaborative economy

nicola.danti@europarl.europa.eu

+ 33 3 88 17 5143

The collaborative or sharing economy is a new phenomenon, which bring us new opportunities as well as several challenges. We demand an ambitious European strategy, which would pave the way for a harmonised and dynamic 'ecosystem' consisting of specific rules and general principles, capable of avoiding the fragmentation of the Single Market. We need to guarantee fair competition between traditional sectors and the new collaborative economy world, ensure a high level of consumer protection, fair working conditions for workers and to encourage the promotion of an EU 'collaborative-economy business model'. If developed in a balanced way, the collaborative economy could contribute to developing our society more sustainably.



DANTI Nicola

► **Tues 13** 2016 Report on Kosovo

pierantonio.panzeri@europarl.europa.eu

+ 33 3 88 17 5349

The entry into force of the EU-Kosovo Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) as a first contractual relationship is an essential step in order to continue the integration of Kosovo into the EU. The launch of the European Reform Agenda is also a very positive follow up and it will be a concrete platform to facilitate the implementation of the Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The S&D Group supports Kosovo on its European path. It is important that the new government continues to show clear political will and determination to implement the agreed roadmap. Regarding the persistent polarisation of the political landscape, the S&D Group calls on all the parties to show responsibility and ownership and to create the conditions for a positive dialogue aimed at facilitating the country's progress towards a European future.



PANZERI
Pier Antonio

► **Tues 13** Oral question on glyphosate

miriam.dalli@europarl.europa.eu

+33 3 88 1 75635

S&D Euro MPs reject the European Commission's announced intention to re-authorise glyphosate for another 10 years. The S&Ds highlight the evident lack of transparency in the classification process of the European agencies. The classification for glyphosate, the world's most widely used herbicidal active substance, was largely based on unpublished scientific evidence provided by the industry or supposedly independent scientific reviews sponsored by the industry. We demand that the precautionary principle be strictly applied in order to ensure better protection for the health of Europeans and that more transparency and public access to scientific studies be guaranteed. If we do not get a satisfactory answer from the European Commission, the S&D Group is willing to call for the establishment of a Parliamentary committee of inquiry or a special committee on this subject.



DALLI
Miriam

Press contact

Utta Tuttlies

*Head of Press & Communications Unit,
Group's spokesperson*
+ 32 473 85 34 07

Jan Bernas

President's Spokesperson
+ 32 471 64 87 77

Solange Hélin-Villes

+ 32 476 510 172

Tim Allan

+ 32 475 635 673

Dimitris Komodromos

+ 32 474 622 884

Evangelia Sali

+ 32 495 56 24 31

Silvia Pelz

+ 32 478 75 07 12

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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.

About the S&D Group

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.

