



Our Priorities

► *Wed 12* State of the Union

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"European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker started his term with the bold announcement that this would be the 'Commission of the last chance'. His last State of the Union address will be the opportunity to assess whether this chance was used wisely or not. Also, Juncker will have to outline the priorities for the remaining months of this term until the European elections in May 2019. With the Brexit talks, the negotiation of the next Multiannual Financial Framework as well as the reform of the Common European Asylum System we have a number of issues on the table that allow no postponement. At the same time, the European Union is contested by internal and external enemies that are trying to undermine its unity. A strong and united European Union has never been as important as it is today, given the fact that the transatlantic relationship under Trump has been considerably weakened. In this situation and one year before the next European elections, it is of utmost importance that we get our priorities straight."

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BULLMANN
UDO

► *Tue 11* The situation in Hungary

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"Over the last seven years, there has been a consistent and sustained attack on basic principles of liberal democracy in Hungary. This is not based on our findings but those of independent institutions and organisations such as the Council of Europe, UN, OSCE and based on verdicts by national and international courts. There are serious concerns in many fields: the functioning of the constitutional and electoral system, the independence of the judiciary and of other institutions, the rights of judges, corruption and conflicts of interest, freedom of expression, academic freedom, the fundamental rights of migrants and economic and social rights. Consequently, the situation in Hungary indeed warrants the launch of the Article 7(1) TEU procedure. The vote on Wednesday is the chance to show that we as Parliamentarians are on the side of democracy, rule of law and the Hungarian people."

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WEIDENHOLZER
Josef

► *Tue 11* State of EU-US relations

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"This is a well-balanced report. On the one hand, it highlights the importance of our strong relationship with the US as a cornerstone for the building up of the multilateral political and trade system based on rules and values since World War II. On the other hand, it is clearly pointing out that the decisions and policies of the current US president and administration undermine mutual trust and harms this long-term partnership. We identify a lot of common challenges and threats and emphasize the importance of NATO for both sides of the Atlantic. Finally, the report encourages the exploration of alternative ways to strengthen the EU-US relationship by using all available channels of communication, including the US Congress in order to preserve the democratic, liberal and multilateral order."

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BOŞTINARU
Victor

► *Mon 10* European Solidarity Corps

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"With this initiative - which integrates the current European Voluntary Service (EVS) -allocating 90% of the available resources to volunteering – we want to send a strong message to young people of up to 30 years of age, in parallel with our battle in Parliament to triple the current funds for Erasmus for 2021/2027. The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) will allow young people - both European and non-European residing in the EU - to fully experience what it means to be part of a transnational community, carrying out voluntary activities from 2 months to 1 year, and also in the context of local projects yet always with a clear European dimension. The ESC will also valorise the experiences of the organizations and associations involved."

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COSTA Silvia

► *Thur 13* Dual quality of products

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"Consumers in different countries complain that they do not enjoy access to the same level of quality when buying branded products. Dual quality of products undermines citizens' confidence in the fair functioning of the EU internal market, and therefore requires a solution at EU level. If the product, no matter whether well-known food, drink, cosmetics or detergent, differs although it appears identical to the consumer, it should be considered as unfair commercial practice and enforced by the competent authorities. Consumer preferences should not be used as an excuse for lowering quality or offering different quality grades on different markets. We, Socialists and Democrats, therefore demand to amend the Unfair Commercial Practices Directive in order to ensure that European consumers finally have the feeling that they are treated fairly and on an equal basis everywhere. There cannot be neither second-class products nor consumers in the EU."



SEHNALOVÁ
Olga

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► *Wed 12* A European Strategy for Plastics

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"The EU Plastic Strategy is a necessary step forward in the EU's transition towards a circular economy and a crucial tool towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to prevent and reduce marine litter. To this aim, it will be necessary to create appropriate economic instruments at the EU level to support the creation of a market for secondary plastic raw materials that can make recycling economically profitable."



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About the S&D Group

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.

