

# Newsletter - 13-16 March 2017 - Strasbourg plenary session

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In Wednesday’s key debate, MEPs will take stock of the outcome of the 9-10 March European Council and discuss the “Rome declaration” on the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome with Council President Donald Tusk, Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, Malta’s Deputy Prime Minister Louis Grech and Italy’s Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni, who will address the plenary for the first time since he took office in December 2016.

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**Beefing up official food inspections from farm to fork** . . . . . 7

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## Further information

- [Draft agenda](#)
- [Follow the plenary live](#)
- [EuroparTV](#)
- [Press conferences and other events](#)
- [EP Audiovisual website](#)
- [EP Newshub](#)
- [EPRS Plenary podcasts on key issues](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Debate on 9-10 March European Council and Rome declaration with Tusk, Juncker, and Gentiloni

In Wednesday's key debate, MEPs will take stock of the outcome of the 9-10 March European Council and discuss the "Rome declaration" on the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome with Council President Donald Tusk, Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, Malta's Deputy Prime Minister Louis Grech and Italy's Prime Minister Paolo Gentiloni, who will address the plenary for the first time since he took office in December 2016.

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: Council and Commission statements with debate*

*#EUCO #euco*

### Further information

- [Agenda of the European Council 9 - 10 March](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Parliament's final vote on shareholders' rights in EU companies

**New tools to sharpen big EU firms' focus on their long-run performance, by fostering their shareholders' commitment to it, will be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday. They will include giving shareholders a say on directors' pay and making it easier for firms to identify their shareholders.**

These tools, informally agreed upon by Parliament and Council negotiators in December 2016, would empower shareholders to vote on remuneration policy for company directors, thus enabling them to tie it more closely to the company's performance and long-term interests.

They would also enable companies to identify their shareholders more easily and thus facilitate dialogue with them, as well as making it easier for shareholders to exercise their rights, including the right to participate and vote in general meetings.

At the same time, new transparency requirements would help institutional investors and asset managers, who are often important shareholders of listed companies in the EU, to step up their shareholder engagement in investment strategies.

*Debate: Monday, 13 March*

*Vote: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading agreement)*

*Press conference: Tuesday, 14 March at 16:00 with the rapporteur and Commissioner Věra Jourová*

*@VeraJourova*

### Further information

- [Draft report on the encouragement of long-term shareholder engagement](#)
- [Press release on inter-institutional agreement](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur: Sergio Gaetano Cofferati \(S&D, IT\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Conflict minerals: MEPs set to secure due diligence obligations for importers

**A draft EU regulation to stop the financing of armed groups and human rights abuses through trade in minerals from conflict areas will be put to a vote on Thursday. This “conflict minerals” law will oblige all but the smallest EU importers of tin, tungsten, tantalum and gold, to do “due diligence” checks on their suppliers, and big manufacturers will also have to disclose how they plan to monitor their sources to comply with the rules.**

In an informal deal on the draft text, to be endorsed in the vote, MEPs persuaded EU ministers that due diligence checks, in accordance with [OECD guidelines](#), should be mandatory for most importers of tin, tungsten, tantalum gold, and their ores from conflict and high-risk areas.

However, small importers, such as dentists and jewellers, will be exempted, so as not to impose unreasonable bureaucratic burdens. Big EU firms that buy these minerals for their products will be encouraged to report on their sourcing practices and may join an EU registry.

### Next steps

Once Parliament and the Council have approved the deal, it will be published in the EU Official Journal. The new Regulation is to apply from 21 January 2021 to allow member states time to appoint competent authorities and importers to become familiar with their obligations. The EU Commission will have to review the effectiveness of the new law regularly and may propose further mandatory measures.

### Background

*Mineral-rich countries afflicted by conflicts face a vicious circle in which revenue from illegally extracted resources feeds armed revolts. The regulation applies to all conflict-affected and high-risk areas in the world, of which the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region are the most obvious examples. Tin, tantalum, tungsten and gold are used in the production of many high-tech devices, in the automotive, electronics, aerospace, packaging, construction, lighting, industrial machinery and tooling industries, as well as in jewellery.*

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Vote: Thursday, 16 March*

*Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading agreement)*

*#conflictminerals*

### Further information

- [Draft Regulation laying down supply chain due diligence obligations for Union importers of tin, tantalum and tungsten, their ores, and gold originating from conflict affected and high-risk areas - final compromise text](#)
- [EPRS Background: Conflict minerals at a glance \(May 2015\)](#)
- [Press release on inter-institutional agreement \(22 Nov 2016\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Iuliu Winkler \(EPP, RO\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Beefing up official food inspections from farm to fork

**Draft plans to tighten up official food inspections, from farm to fork, will be debated on Tuesday and put to a vote on Wednesday. The legislation, already informally agreed by MEPs and the Council, aims to improve food traceability, combat fraud and restore consumer trust in the integrity of the food chain.**

The legislation will provide a comprehensive, integrated and more effective control system in the areas of food and feed safety rules, veterinary and plant health requirements, organic production and protected geographical indication rules.

Recent food fraud cases such as the horsemeat scandal, have shown the need for more effective action by enforcement authorities to protect consumers and honest operators alike against risks arising from breaches of rules anywhere in the food chain.

*Debate: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Vote: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure, second reading agreement*

*#officialcontrols #foodfraud*

### Further information

- [Committee recommendation tabled for plenary, on official controls and other official activities performed to ensure the application of food and feed law](#)
- [Press release following the interinstitutional agreement \(16.06.2016\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Karin Kadenbach \(S&D, AT\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research: Fighting food fraud](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Waste: towards more recycling, less landfilling

**The share of waste to be recycled would rise to 70% by 2030, from 44% today, under draft plans to be voted on Tuesday. MEPs also want the “waste package” plans to limit the share of landfilling, which has a big environmental impact, to 5% and to deliver a 50% reduction in food waste by 2030.**

By 2030, at least 70% by weight of “municipal” waste (from households and small businesses) should be recycled or prepared for re-use, (i.e. checked, cleaned or repaired), say MEPs. The EU Commission proposed 65%.

For packaging materials such as paper and cardboard, plastics, glass, metal and wood, MEPs propose a recycling target of 80% by 2030, with interim 2025 targets for each material.

*Debate: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Vote: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure, first reading*

*Press conference: Wednesday tbc*

*#waste #recycling #landfilling #circulareconomy*

### Further information

- [Draft report on waste](#)
- [Draft report on packaging waste](#)
- [Draft report on landfill of waste](#)
- [Draft report on end-of-life vehicles; batteries and accumulators and waste batteries and accumulators; waste electrical and electronic equipment](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(24.01.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Simona Bonafè \(S&D, IT\)](#)
- [Procedure file: Waste](#)
- [Procedure file: Packaging waste](#)
- [Procedure file: Landfill of waste](#)
- [Procedure file: Vehicles, batteries and accumulators, waste of electrical and electronic equipment](#)
- [Infographics](#)
- [EP Research: circular economy package](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)



# Plenary sessions

## Debate on US “global gag” anti-abortion rule with Federica Mogherini

**MEPs will debate US President Donald Trump’s reinstatement of the “global gag” rule, which obliges US-funded foreign NGOs to certify that they will not perform or actively promote abortion, with EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini on Tuesday at 15.00.**

The “[Presidential Memorandum Regarding the Mexico City Policy](#)” an executive order prohibiting international NGOs that receive US funding from providing abortion services or offering information about abortions, was signed by Mr Trump on 23 January 2017

The US is the largest donor to global health efforts, providing nearly \$3 billion towards health efforts through the United States Agency for International Development (USAid).

*Debate: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Statement by the Vice High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to propose keeping Arctic a low-tension area

Climate change is raising geopolitical tensions in the Arctic, as the melting ice cap opens up new navigation and fishing routes, and inspires increased competition for its natural resources, says a draft resolution to be debated on Wednesday and voted on Thursday. MEPs are set to say that the Arctic should remain a low-tension area, advocate protecting its vulnerable ecosystem, and call for a ban on Arctic oil and gas extraction.

The draft text points out that Arctic has been warming about twice as fast as the global average and that sea ice has been shrinking significantly since 1981, to about 40% less than its summer extent 35 years ago.

MEPs also note the increased presence of Russian forces in the Arctic and China's interest in accessing new shipping routes and energy resources. (M, 61)

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Vote: Thursday, 16 March*

*Procedure: Non-binding resolution*

*#Arctic*

### Further information

- [Draft resolution on an integrated EU policy for the Arctic](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(31.01.2017\)](#)
- [EP rapporteur from AFET Urmas Paet \(ALDE, EE\)](#)
- [EP rapporteur from ENVI Sirpa Pietikainen \(EPP, FI\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research briefing on Arctic \(January 2017\)](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Firearms directive: preventing guns falling into the wrong hands

**A revised EU gun law, aimed at closing security loopholes while addressing the concerns of legitimate users, will be debated and voted by Parliament on Tuesday. The new rules tighten controls on blank firing and inadequately deactivated weapons like those used in the Paris terror attacks. They also require EU countries to have a monitoring system in place for the issuance or renewal of licences and to exchange information.**

The EU firearms directive sets out the conditions under which private persons may lawfully acquire and possess guns or transfer them to another EU country.

The provisional deal reached by Parliament and Council negotiators last December aims to balance the interests of legitimate gun owners, such as sport shooters, hunters, reservists, collectors and re-enactors, with the need to protect the public interest in a more secure Europe.

You can find more information on the revised directive in this [background note](#).

### Next steps

Once approved by Parliament and the EU Council of Ministers, member states will have 15 months from the date of entry into force of the directive to transpose the new rules into their national laws and 30 months to put in place data-filling systems for registering all information needed in order to trace and identify firearms.

*Debate: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Vote: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Co-decision (Ordinary Legislative Procedure), first reading agreement*

*#guncontrol #firearms*

### Further information

- [Firearms directive: text of the provisional EP/Council agreement](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(26.01.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Vicky Ford \(ECR, UK\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research Service: Control of the acquisition and possession of weapons](#)
- [Council's press release on the agreement \(20.12.2016\)](#)
- [Commission's press release \(20.12.2016\)](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to assess EU security policy one year on from Brussels terrorist attacks

**Progress on the European security agenda since the 22 March 2016 terrorist attacks in Brussels will be debated on Wednesday. Enhancing information sharing, combatting terrorism financing, preventing radicalisation and guarding the EU's external land and sea borders better are key priorities.**

In the past year, the EU has approved, inter alia, a directive on the use of Passenger Name Records (PNR - which should help to trace terrorists), updated rules on counter-terrorism measures and new requirements to check everyone crossing EU external borders.

Further initiatives in the pipeline include reviewing the Schengen Information System and the European Criminal Records Information System and establishing a new European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) to pre-screen travellers entering the EU visa free.

In September 2016, Sir Julian King was appointed as Commissioner for Security Union, a newly-created portfolio.

### **Topical debates**

Parliament's new Rules of Procedure ([rule 153](#)) provide for one debate of 60-90 minutes at each part-session on a topical matter, proposed by one political group, of major interest to EU policy. Each group has the right to propose at least one such debate.

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: Topical debate*

**#PNR #SecurityUnion**

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to debate progress on corporate tax avoidance crackdown

Progress on Parliament's call for a crackdown on corporate tax avoidance will be debated with the Council and Commission on Tuesday. MEPs will quiz them on proposals such as country-by-country reporting of profit, tax and subsidies, improving the transparency of the Council Code of Conduct Working Group on Business Taxation, and stronger protection for whistle blowers.

Parliament's recommendations for better EU-wide coordination on tax issues were based on the findings, reported in 2015 and 2016, of two special parliamentary committees which investigated the tax rulings that prompted the "Luxleaks" scandal.

The Commission has already turned some of Parliament's recommendations into legislative proposals. This debate is an opportunity to press the Commission to act on the remaining ones, and also urge the Council to give its assent.

*Debate: Tuesday, 14 March*

### Further information

- [EP resolution: Bringing transparency, coordination and convergence to corporate tax policies \(16.12.2015\)](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs set to welcome Montenegro's reform efforts

Parliament will review Montenegro's 2016 reform efforts with Enlargement Commissioner Johannes Hahn on Wednesday. MEPs are likely to welcome Montenegro's progress in EU accession talks, despite Russia's attempts to influence it and to destabilise the Western Balkans. A resolution will be voted on Thursday.

EU accession negotiations with Montenegro started in June 2012. Twenty-six chapters have been opened and two closed so far.

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Vote: Thursday, 16 March*

*Procedure: Non-binding resolution*

[#EUenlargement @JHahnEU](#)

### Further information

- [Draft resolution on the 2016 Commission report on Montenegro](#)
- [EP rapporteur on Montenegro Charles Tannock \(ECR, UK\)](#)
- [EU enlargement status \(European Commission information\)](#)
- [Procedure file on Montenegro](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Defence: MEPs urge member states to show political will and join forces

Defence cooperation in the EU is now more dependent on political will than on legal considerations, say Foreign Affairs and Constitutional Affairs committees in a joint resolution to be debated on Wednesday and voted on Thursday.

MEPs suggest treating the European Defence Agency (EDA) and the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO) as *sui generis* EU institutions, funded by the EU budget, and advocate establishing a “defence ministers” meeting format within the EU Council of Ministers.

They also consider it essential to increase national defence expenditure to 2% of GDP, stressing that this would mean finding an extra €100 billion for defence by the end of the coming decade.

### **Background**

*This resolution aims to clarify the European Parliament’s position on the future of EU defence policies, in time for the 60th anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. It explores possibilities for deepening EU-wide defence cooperation within the framework of the current Lisbon Treaty.*

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Vote: Thursday, 16 March*

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

*#EUDefence #CSDP @EUDefenceAgency*

### **Further information**

- [Draft resolution on constitutional, legal and institutional implications of a common security and defence policy](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(09.02.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Michael Gahler \(EPP, DE\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Esteban González Pons \(EPP, ES\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Rabbits: MEPs to call for phasing out of battery cages

**EU member states should encourage rabbit farmers gradually to replace battery cages with affordable welfare alternatives, says a draft non-legislative resolution to be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday. Improving rabbits' welfare and living conditions could help prevent diseases and thus reduce the use of antibiotics that might end up in the food chain, MEPs say.**

The draft resolution, tabled by Agriculture Committee MEPs, also calls on the EU Commission to propose EU-wide recommendations on farmed rabbits' health, welfare and housing and to do more to support the sector.

### **Background**

*Most rabbits farmed in the EU are reared in conventional cages, notes the draft resolution. Farmed rabbit housing systems have improved over time and alternatives to cages, such as park or pen farming systems, have been used, but they must be further improved and encouraged, MEPs say.*

*Around 340 million rabbits are slaughtered for meat in the EU every year. Output is falling steadily - by 3.9% in 2016 according to forecasts – because consumer demand is falling.*

*The EU is the world's leading rabbit producer, ahead of China, which is its leading rabbit meat exporter. Around 99% of the EU's rabbit meat imports originate in China.*

*Debate: Monday, 13 March*

*Vote: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Non-legislative resolution*

*#AnimalWelfare*

### **Further information**

- [Draft resolution on minimum standards for the protection of farm rabbits](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(25.01.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Stefan Eck \(GUE/NGL, DE\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)



# Plenary sessions

## Horses: MEPs want tougher penalties for mistreatment

People who mistreat or abandon horses should face tougher penalties, says a draft resolution to be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday. MEPs are also set to call for measures to educate owners better on animal husbandry, improve food safety and help the sector increase its revenues.

The draft non-legislative resolution, tabled by the Parliament's Agriculture Committee, also calls on the EU Commission to come up with a proposal to cut journey time limits for horses destined for slaughter.

### **Background**

*The EU has about 7 million equidae, used in areas including transport, tourism, sports, education, research, forestry and agriculture. The equid sector is worth over €100 billion per annum within the EU. (A) Five to seven equidae create one full-time job in economically vulnerable rural areas.*

*Equid abandonment has increased since 2008 in western member states, especially where horses have become expensive luxuries, constituting a major financial burden rather than a source of income.*

*Equidae are the most transported animals in Europe in proportion to their population.*

*Debate: Monday, 13 March*

*Vote: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Non-legislative resolution*

*#AnimalWelfare*

### **Further information**

- [Draft resolution on minimum standards for the protection of farm rabbits](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(25.01.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Julie Girling \(ECR, UK\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs want EU Commission to clarify its position on German road toll scheme

**Revised plans for a German toll system still have “elements that represent a breach of EU law”, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be voted on Wednesday.**

The original road toll scheme, adopted on 8 June 2015, would have allowed German drivers to deduct whatever they paid in tolls from their vehicle tax bills, and as this option is not open to foreign drivers, it would lead to a breach of EU non-discrimination rules, the [EU Commission said](#).

The Commission launched [infringement proceedings](#) against Germany on 18 June 2015, but then suspended them after reaching an [agreement](#) with the German Ministry of Transport Infrastructure on 1 December 2016 on a revised scheme.

The revised scheme still “does not impose an additional burden on German drivers and therefore maintains an indirect discrimination based on nationality”, MEPs say in a draft resolution tabled by the Transport and Tourism Committee. They ask the Commission to say why it considered the revised plans sufficient to justify suspending the infringement proceedings.

### **Background: road toll systems in the EU**

*Based on the “user/polluter pays” principle, many EU countries have introduced road tolls for cars on certain stretches of their road infrastructure. Although differing in design and pricing, the various systems in place apply indiscriminately to all users.*

- *Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Poland, Croatia, Greece and Italy charge distance-based tariffs.*
- *Austria, Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Bulgaria and Romania use time-based “vignette” systems.*
- *Germany, Nordic and Baltic countries, the Benelux and most of the UK still do not charge tolls on most of their networks.*

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 February*

*Vote: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

### **Further information**

- [Draft resolution](#)
- [Press release on the vote in the Transport and Tourism Committee \(28.02.2016\)](#)
- [Video recording of the debate in plenary \(15.02.2017\)](#)
- [Question for oral answer to the Commission \(debated 15.02.2017\)](#)
- [EC press release \(01.12.2016\): European Commission and Germany reach agreement on a fair and non-discriminatory road charging scheme](#)
- [EC press release \(18.06.2015\): Commission launches infringement case on the introduction by Germany of a new road charging scheme for private vehicles \(“PKW-Maut”\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Sustainable growth, jobs and security: MEPs set to adopt 2018 budget priorities

Growth and jobs, particularly for young people, must remain key EU budget priorities, along with tackling migration and climate change, MEPs say in draft guidelines for EU Commission officials preparing the EU's draft 2018 budget. The budget "must be equipped with the tools to enable it to respond to multiple crises simultaneously" and must also address EU citizens' safety and security concerns, say the draft guidelines, to be debated on Tuesday and voted on Wednesday.

The budget guidelines are the first document that Parliament produces in the annual budget procedure. It sets out the line that Parliament expects the Commission to take when drawing up its budget proposals.

### Next steps

The Commission is expected to present its draft budget proposal for 2018 in May. Next year's budget has to be agreed by the Council and Parliament before the end of this year.

*Debate: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Vote: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: Budgetary*

*#EUBudget*

### Further information

- [Press release on committee vote \(06.03.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur: Siegfried Mureşan \(EPP, RO\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to condemn obstacles to EU citizens' right to free movement

**All EU countries should remove any remaining discriminatory and unnecessary barriers to EU citizens wishing to work and reside in another member state, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be voted on Wednesday.**

The resolution notes that Parliament's Petitions Committee has received over 40 petitions raising concerns about obstacles to EU citizens' exercising their right to free movement within the Union.

MEPs also voice grave concern that some EU countries expel EU citizens shortly after their work contracts in the country expire and deplore the fact that some effectively deny social protection to EU nationals other than their own.

*Vote: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

*#FreeMovement #SocialRights #InternalMarket*

### Further information

- [Press release on committee vote \(28.02.2017\)](#)
- [SOLVIT - solutions to problems with your EU rights](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs and Commission to debate funding rules for European political parties

**A request that the EU Commission join Parliament in reviewing funding rules for European political parties will be debated with Commission representatives on Wednesday. MEPs are seeking, inter alia, to strengthen controls designed to ensure that European political parties respect EU fundamental values.**

The review request was originally tabled by the Presidents of three European political parties, the European People's Party, the Party of European Socialists and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe, on 22 April 2016.

*Debate: Wednesday, 15 March*

*Procedure: oral question to the Commission followed by debate*

### Further information

- [Oral question on review of the regulation on the statute and funding of European political parties and foundations](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Stepping up the fight for gender equality

**The EU and its member states should step up their efforts to achieve equality between women and men, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday.**

Despite progress on some gender inequality issues, much remains to be done to reduce pay gaps, remove “glass ceilings” on women’s careers, remedy their lack of economic independence and improve their work/life balance.

MEPs urge the Commission and EU member states to:

- put forward a package of legislative and non-legislative measures regarding work-life balance,
- adopt the Women on Boards directive,
- table a draft law to promote and support the action of member states to prevent violence against women,
- guarantee women’s ready access to voluntary family planning and the full range of reproductive and sexual health services, including contraception and abortion,
- monitor the media and advertising industry for products that promote sexualisation and commodification of women and portray female stereotypes, and
- monitor respect in the media and the advertising industry for the dignity of women.

Although women on average have a higher level of education than men, the gender pay gap in the EU is 16.1% and the average gender pension gap is even greater, at 40.2%.

*Debate: Monday, 13, March*

*Vote: Tuesday, 14 March*

*Procedure: Non-binding resolution*

*#IWD2017 #equalpayforequalwork #genderequality*

### Further information

- [Draft resolution on equality between women and men in the European Union in 2014-2015](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur: Ernest Urtasun \(Greens/EFA, ES\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Article: Gender equality: time to close the gap](#)
- [Webcomm top story: International Women's Day 2017: economic empowerment](#)
- [EPTV: Closing Europe's gender gap](#)
- [EPTV: More women in science](#)
- [Plenary on demand: Gender pay gap debate \(01.03.2017\)](#)
- [EP Research: Gender pay gap](#)
- [Assessing progress towards gender equality](#)
- [Maternity, paternity and parental leave in the EU](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Human rights and democracy resolutions

Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights and democracy topics on Thursday 16 March, at around 10.00, with the votes following at 12.00.

- Sudan, the cases of Hassan Abduraheem and Abdulmonen Abdumawla
- Ukrainian political prisoners in Russia and situation in Crimea
- Philippines, the case of senator Leila M. De Lima

*Procedure: non-legislative resolutions*

*Debates/votes: Thursday 16 March*

*#humanrights #democracy*

## Listing

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- Freeing up MHz frequency band for internet, Toia (COD), *debate Tue, Vote Wed*
- eDemocracy, Jauregui (INI), *debate Wed, vote Thu*
- Big data: fundamental rights implications, Gomes (INI), *debate Mon, vote Tue*
- Mercury, Eck (COD) agreement, *debate Mon, vote Tue*
- - EU priorities for the UN Human Rights Council sessions in 2017, *debate Tue, vote Thu*
- Data system on fisheries, Affronte (COD), *debate Thu, vote Thu*