

## Newsletter - 24-27 October 2016 - Strasbourg plenary session

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### MEPs to debate EU summit outcome with Juncker and Tusk . . . . . 3

MEPs will assess the results of the European Council meeting of 20-21 October in a three-hour debate with Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Council President Donald Tusk on Wednesday morning. Issues raised will include the fate of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), negotiations for free trade deals with other countries, EU-Russia relations, upgrading EU trade defence instruments, Mediterranean migration trends and protecting the EU's external borders.

### Commission Work Programme: Parliament to debate EU priorities for 2017 . . . . 4

The EU Commission's to-do list for 2017 will be debated by MEPs on Tuesday afternoon, immediately after the Commission adopts it. This year's debate on the Commission Work Programme will contribute to the first-ever joint declaration, to be signed by the Presidents of Parliament, Council and Commission in December, on common objectives and priorities for the following year.

### More funds for jobs for young people: MEPs to vote stance on EU budget for 2017 . . . . . 5

Parliament is to adopt its position on next year's EU budget, ahead of negotiations with the Council, in a vote on Wednesday. MEPs are set to demand more funds to help young people into jobs, boost economic growth and help third countries with a view to mitigating the migration crisis. They plan to reverse all the cuts made by the Council to the draft budget.

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### MEPs to call for annual health check on fundamental rights in EU member states . . . . . 7

To end the current "crisis-driven" approach to perceived breaches of fundamental rights, the EU Commission should set up a binding mechanism to report annually on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in all EU member states, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be voted on Tuesday. This mechanism should include objective benchmarks and lay down a clear, gradual approach to remedying breaches, they add.

### Citizens' safety: MEPs to debate progress on security issues and way forward . . 8

MEPs will debate progress in boosting security, as agreed at EU level, on Tuesday afternoon. Improving the interoperability of databases and data exchange, preventing radicalisation and progress in implementing the passenger name record (PNR) rules approved in Spring 2016, are likely to be raised in the debate with the Council and Commission.

### MEPs to call for clampdown on industrial trans fats in food . . . . . 9

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/news-room/plenary>

## Further information

- [Final draft agenda](#)
- [EP Live](#)
- [EuroparlTV](#)
- [EbS+](#)
- [Press conferences and other events](#)
- [EP Audiovisual website](#)
- [EP Newshub](#)
- [EPRS Plenary podcasts on key issues](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to debate EU summit outcome with Juncker and Tusk

MEPs will assess the results of the European Council meeting of 20-21 October in a three-hour debate with Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Council President Donald Tusk on Wednesday morning. Issues raised will include the fate of the EU-Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), negotiations for free trade deals with other countries, EU-Russia relations, upgrading EU trade defence instruments, Mediterranean migration trends and protecting the EU's external borders.

Parliament's President Martin Schulz will address the 28 EU heads of state or government at the beginning of the Council meeting in Brussels on 20 October at 16.30, followed by a press conference.

*Procedure: European Council and Commission statement*

*Debate: Wednesday, 26 October*

*#euco #migrationEU #Russia #trade #brexit*

*#CETA #China*

### Further information

- [Agenda of the European Council 20-21 October](#)
- [What EP political group leaders expect from EU leaders' meeting \(Press Release and Videos, 05.10.2016\)](#)
- [View the complete pre-summit debate \(05.10.2016\)](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Commission Work Programme: Parliament to debate EU priorities for 2017

The EU Commission's to-do list for 2017 will be debated by MEPs on Tuesday afternoon, immediately after the Commission adopts it. This year's debate on the Commission Work Programme will contribute to the first-ever joint declaration, to be signed by the Presidents of Parliament, Council and Commission in December, on common objectives and priorities for the following year.

Tuesday's debate comes after the State of the Union address by President Jean-Claude Juncker in September before Parliament and a [resolution](#) passed by MEPs in July urging that jobs, social rights and security should top the EU agenda for 2017.

The joint declaration will list what the three institutions see as key policy areas, to be given priority treatment in the EU legislative process in order to deliver rapid results.

*Procedure: Commission statement followed by a debate*

*Debate: Tuesday, 25 October*

[2016/2724\(RSP\)](#)

[#CWP2017](#) [#EU2017Agenda](#)

### Further information

- [EP resolution on the Commission's Work programme \(text adopted on 06.07.2016\)](#)
- [EP resolution on the Commission's Work programme passed in July \(press release, 06.07.2016\)](#)
- [Commission website dedicated to its annual Work Programme](#)
- [Work Programme 2017: EP procedure file 2016/2724\(RSP\)](#)

# Plenary sessions

## More funds for jobs for young people: MEPs to vote stance on EU budget for 2017

Parliament is to adopt its position on next year's EU budget, ahead of negotiations with the Council, in a vote on Wednesday. MEPs are set to demand more funds to help young people into jobs, boost economic growth and help third countries with a view to mitigating the migration crisis. They plan to reverse all the cuts made by the Council to the draft budget.

For example, MEPs want to add €1.5 billion in commitment appropriations for the Youth Employment Initiative, to help youngsters desperately seeking a job.

They also propose adding a total of €1.24 billion for the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF), which funds infrastructure projects, and the Horizon 2020 programme, which backs research projects.

MEPs are also set to ask for more money to tackle the root causes of the migration crisis, support farmers and reinforce spending on culture.

They expect some of the additional funds to come via new appropriations to be obtained through the ongoing mid-term revision of the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

### Next steps

The plenary vote will kick off three weeks of "conciliation" talks with the Council, with the aim of reaching a deal between the two institutions in time for next year's budget to be voted by Parliament and signed by its President in December.

*Procedure: Budgetary*

[2016/2047\(BUD\)](#)

*Debate: Tuesday, 25 October*

*Vote: Wednesday, 26 October*

*Press conference with rapporteurs Jens Geier (S&D, DE) and Indrek Tarand (Greens, EE): Wednesday 26 October, 14:00-14:30*

*#EUBudget #EUBudget2017*

### Further information

- [Draft resolution on the draft general budget of the European Union for 2017](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(11.10.2016\)](#)
- [Profile of lead rapporteur \(for the Commission budget\) Jens Geier \(S&D, DE\)](#)
- [Profile of the rapporteur for the other sections Indrek Tarand \(Greens/EFA, EE\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Council press release on its position on the EU Budget 2017](#)
- [EP resolution on general guidelines for the preparation of the 2017 budget \(09.03.2016\)](#)
- [Budget procedure for 2017 – all documents](#)

# Plenary sessions

## EU's long-term budget: MEPs to press for more headroom to cope with crises

**The EU needs to update its long-term financial plan to cope with unforeseen crises, MEPs will argue in Monday's debate on its forthcoming revision with Commissioner Kristalina Georgieva. MEPs acknowledge that the Commission's proposal to revise the multiannual financial framework (MFF) genuinely responds to Parliament's July request for more flexibility and an EU crisis reserve, but are disappointed that resources remain unchanged. A resolution will be voted on Tuesday.**

The multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2014-2020 does not suffice to enable the EU to deal with the many new crises and priorities that have emerged in recent years. The EU's budget must be made more flexible to respond promptly to challenges such as the migration and refugee crisis, terrorism and internal security issues, the crisis in agriculture or persistently high unemployment, especially among young people, says the draft resolution. The MFF revision provides a unique opportunity to enable the EU to deliver on its promises, say MEPs.

Parliament's [July suggestion](#) that a permanent EU crisis reserve should be created within the EU budget, to avoid ad hoc solutions such as the setting up of "off budget" trust funds, was included in the Commission's [September proposal](#), but MEPs insist that this reserve must be properly funded.

The draft resolution stresses that any modifications agreed during the MFF mid-term revision should be integrated in the EU's 2017 budget. MEPs are ready to engage in negotiations with the Council to agree on both the 2017 budget and the MFF revision before the end of 2016.

*Procedure: Commission statement with resolution*

[2016/2931\(RSP\)](#)

*Debate: Monday, 24 October*

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

[#MFF](#) [#EUBudget](#)

### Further information

- [EP Think Tank: Mid-term review/revision of the MFF: Key issues at the outset of the debate](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP resolution: Preparation of the post-electoral revision of the MFF 2014-2020: Parliament's input ahead of the Commission's proposal \(06.07.2017\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Jan Olbrycht \(EPP, PL\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Isabelle Thomas \(S&D, FR\)](#)

# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to call for annual health check on fundamental rights in EU member states

To end the current “crisis-driven” approach to perceived breaches of fundamental rights, the EU Commission should set up a binding mechanism to report annually on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights in all EU member states, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be voted on Tuesday. This mechanism should include objective benchmarks and lay down a clear, gradual approach to remedying breaches, they add.

The EU mechanism on democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights would be modelled on the European Semester annual cycle of economic policy guidance and surveillance. Each year the Commission, in consultation with a panel of experts, would draw up an assessment report, which should include country-specific recommendations.

In the draft report, MEPs call on the Commission to submit a proposal by September 2017. The Commission will have to give a reasoned response to Parliament’s request.

*Procedure: legislative resolution (INL) absolute majority (majority of members composing the EP), according to Rule 46 of the Rules of Procedure*

[2015/2254\(INL\)](#)

*Debate/vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

*Press conference: tbc*

*#democracy #ruleoflaw #fundamentalrights*

### Further information

- [Draft report on the establishment of an EU mechanism on democracy, the rule of law and fundamental rights](#)
- [Rapporteur Sophie In't Veld \(ALDE, NL\)](#)
- [Rule 46 : Initiative pursuant to Article 225 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union](#)
- [Procedure file](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Citizens' safety: MEPs to debate progress on security issues and way forward

MEPs will debate progress in boosting security, as agreed at EU level, on Tuesday afternoon. Improving the interoperability of databases and data exchange, preventing radicalisation and progress in implementing the passenger name record (PNR) rules approved in Spring 2016, are likely to be raised in the debate with the Council and Commission.

### *Note to editors*

On 12 October, the EU Commission presented the first in a series of monthly [reports](#) on progress towards an effective and sustainable security union.

The Civil Liberties Committee is working on a proposal to update the [EURODAC](#) database of asylum seekers' fingerprints. A proposal to update the Schengen Information System (SIS) is expected from the EU Commission by the end of the year, and another, to update the Visa Information System (VIS), is expected early next year.

*Procedure: Council and Commission statements*

*Debate: Tuesday 25 October*

#counterterrorism, #securityUnion

### Further information

- [European Agenda on Security: First report on progress towards an effective and sustainable Security Union](#) (European Commission press release 12.10.2016):
- [State of play of the Security Union](#) (October 2016):
- [Parliament endorses Sir Julian King as Commissioner for Security Union](#) (15.09.2016):



# Plenary sessions

## MEPs to call for clampdown on industrial trans fats in food

**The EU should place mandatory limits on industrially-produced trans-fatty acids which may increase the risk of cardiovascular disease, infertility, Alzheimer's, diabetes and obesity, says a draft resolution to be put to a vote on Wednesday.**

MEPs say the fact that only one in three consumers in the EU knows about trans-fatty acids (TFAs) shows that labelling alone is not sufficient. TFA labelling is important, but needs to be backed up by mandatory limits, they add.

The EU Commission should therefore propose an EU legal limit on the industrial TFA content of all foods as soon as possible, and preferably within two years, say MEPs.

TFAs tend to be used in cheaper foods, which means that people on lower incomes are most exposed to foodstuffs with a higher TFA content. This in turn increases the potential for widening health inequalities.

### *Note to editors*

*Trans-fatty acids (TFAs) are unsaturated fats found in foods obtained from ruminants and in industrially-produced partially hydrogenated vegetable oils. Their consumption has been associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular disease. High TFA intake is a risk factor for developing coronary heart disease, which accounts for some 660,000 deaths annually in the EU or some 14% of overall mortality, according to the European Commission.*

*Denmark was the first EU member state to limit the content of trans fats in oils and fats by law in 2003. Similar national legal limits have since been introduced in Austria (2009) Hungary (2013) and Latvia (2015). Voluntary measures to reduce TFA content are in place in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, Poland, the UK and Greece. National dietary recommendations on TFAs have been issued in Bulgaria, Malta, Slovakia, the UK and Finland.*

*In June 2015, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published a decision determining that partially hydrogenated oils, the primary dietary source of industrial trans fats in processed foods, were no longer “generally recognized as safe” for use in human food and are to be prohibited by June 2018..*

### *Foods containing high levels of trans fats:*

- *frying fat for industrial use*
- *margarine used in pastry*
- *pre-packed bakery products, cakes, biscuits and wafers*
- *microwave popcorn*
- *deep-fried foods*
- *soups and sauces.*

# Plenary sessions

*Procedure: Oral questions to Council and the Commission with resolution*

[2016/2637\(RSP\)](#)

*Debate: Tuesday, 25 October*

*Vote: Wednesday, 26 October*

[#transfats](#) [#FoodLabelling](#)[#ConsumerProtection](#)[#FoodChoices](#)

## Further information

- [Draft resolution](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research: Trans Fats, overview of recent developments](#)
- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Imported plant pests: vote on prevention, surveillance and contingency measures

New EU rules to help prevent the influx and spread of plant pests in Europe, such as olive grove killer *Xylella fastidiosa*, and halt potential outbreaks more effectively, will be up for a vote on Wednesday, following a debate on Tuesday.

A reform of the EU's plant health rules, as agreed by MEPs and member states in December 2015 and endorsed by the Council in July 2016, would introduce new preventive and rapid response mechanisms for suspect plant imports, step up pest surveillance efforts in the EU and require all member states to draw up outbreak contingency plans.

### Background

*Plant pests or harmful organisms, such as insects, fungi, bacteria and viruses can cause serious damage to plants and crop losses, especially when they come from other continents, as they can spread rapidly if there is no generic resistance to them within the EU. *Xylella fastidiosa* devastated close to 30,000 hectares of olive groves in the Italian region of Apulia in 2014.*

*The new rules aim to remedy weaknesses in the current EU plant health regime including:*

- an insufficient focus on prevention, in view of given increased imports of high-risk commodities,*
- the need for better instruments for controlling the presence and natural spread of pests in case they eventually reach EU territory, and*
- the need to modernise and upgrade instruments for intra-EU movements (such as plant passports).*

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

[2013/0141\(COD\)](#)

*Debate: Tuesday, 25 October*

*Vote: Wednesday, 26 October*

*Press conference: Wednesday, 26 October at 14:30*

*#PlantHealth #PlantPests #XylellaFastidiosa*

### Further information

- [Consolidated text of the provisionally agreed regulation](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research Briefing: Plant health legislation - protective measures against plant pests](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Anthea McIntyre \(ECR, UK\)](#)
- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Migration: MEPs to call on EU Commission to ensure protection of minors

**Migrant children, and especially those travelling alone, are among the most vulnerable people on earth. Every one of them needs protection and is entitled to it under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, MEPs will point out in a debate with the EU Commission on Wednesday.**

MEPs have repeatedly called on the Commission and member states to respect the right to family reunification and access to education. They must also offer unaccompanied asylum seekers appropriate reception facilities.

*Debate: Wednesday, 26 October*

*Procedure: Question for oral answer without resolution*

*#migration*

### Further information

- [Question for oral answer on EU policies and actions to protect children in the context of migration](#)
- [EU - Turkey deal should be taken to Court, French human rights ombudsman tells MEPs \(Press release, 18.10.2016, on the situation of minors in the Calais camps\)](#)
- [Fate of 10,000 missing refugee children debated in Civil Liberties Committee \(Press release, 21.04.2016\)](#)
- [EP resolution of 12.04.2016 on the situation in the Mediterranean and the need for a holistic EU approach to migration](#)

## Commission to present common consolidated corporate tax base proposal

**Commissioner Pierre Moscovici is set to present the Commission's new corporate tax proposals in the plenary chamber on Tuesday afternoon. The package will include, inter alia, a proposal for a common consolidated corporate tax base (CCCTB).**

The European Parliament has several times pressed the Commission to come up with a common consolidated corporate tax base, which should make corporate taxation in the EU fairer and more transparent.

A CCCTB would give companies operating in the EU a single set of rules for calculating their taxable profits. So a company would have to comply with just one EU-wide system for computing its taxable income, rather than different rules in each member state in which it operates. This reduces the risk of mismatches and loopholes, which are now widely exploited by tax advisors and multinational companies.

*Procedure: Statement by the Commission*

*Debate: Tuesday, 25 October*

*#TaxTransparency #LuxLeaks*

# Plenary sessions

## Further information

- [More information about Parliament's work and recommendations on corporate taxation](#)
- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

## MEPs to call for fresh efforts to foster EU-Iran relations

**The EU should reset its relations with Iran through dialogue, says a draft resolution to be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday. MEPs advocate expanding trade with Iran, call for active EU diplomacy to de-escalate tensions between Tehran and Riyadh and urge “an immediate moratorium on the carrying out of death sentences in Iran”.**

The EU commitment to a renewed engagement with Iran should be multi-faceted: political, economic, academic, technical and people-to-people contacts, says the draft.

MEPs suggest advancing the EU - Iran relations hand in hand with the implementation of the recent nuclear deal, reiterating that any backsliding by Iran “can lead to the reintroduction of sanctions”.

*Procedure: Non-legislative resolution*

[2015/2274\(INI\)](#)

*Debate: Monday, 24 October*

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

*#Iran*

## Further information

- [Draft resolution on EU strategy towards Iran after the nuclear agreement](#)
- [EP rapporteur Richard Howitt \(S&D, UK\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Policy department study on EU strategy towards Iran \(June 2016\)](#)

## MEPs to call for uniform fair treatment for EU fishermen

**EU fisheries rules should be applied uniformly to all EU fishermen, so that they are treated fairly, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday. Inspection procedures, e.g. for net mesh sizes and catches, should be standardized, as should penalties for infringements, it says. Introducing an EU “core curriculum” for training all fisheries inspectors, and using compatible real-time communication technologies EU wide, would also help improve fairness, it adds.**

MEPs are concerned about huge differences in national control methods, sanctions and the use of technologies as these create an environment where “for the same infraction the sanction may be either an administrative or a penal one.”

They ask that inspections be expanded to cover the entire production chain and that controls at sea be assigned to a single national administrative body.

# Plenary sessions

The non-legislative resolution comes ahead of the upcoming revision of the [Control System Council Regulation](#) expected in 2017.

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

[2015/2093\(INI\)](#)

*Debate: Monday, 24 October*

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

[#EUfisheries](#) [#fisheriescontrol](#)

## Further information

- [Draft resolution on how to make fisheries controls in Europe uniform](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Isabelle Thomas \(S&D, FR\)](#)
- [EUROSTAT webpage on fishery statistics](#)
- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

## Disabled and elderly people to get easier access to online public services

**Websites and apps of public administrations, hospitals, courts and other public sector bodies will have to be made accessible to everyone, under new EU-wide rules to be voted on Wednesday. The web accessibility directive, already agreed by Parliament and Council negotiators, should make it easier for disabled and elderly people to access data and services on the internet, e.g. to file a tax declaration, apply for an allowance, pay fees or enrol at university.**

Under the new rules, the websites and mobile apps of public sector bodies - from administrations, courts and police departments to public hospitals, universities and libraries - will have to meet common EU accessibility standards.

A “feedback mechanism” will have to be put in place to enable users to request specific information if content is inaccessible or to report compliance issues. Member states will have to designate an authority tasked with monitoring and enforcing these rules.

Around 80 million people in the EU have a disability. As the EU population ages, the number of people with a disability or age-related limitations is expected to increase to 120 million by 2020.

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

[2012/0340\(COD\)](#)

*Debate: Tuesday, 25 October*

*Vote: Wednesday, 26 October*

[#WebAccessibility](#) [#Access4All](#)

# Plenary sessions

## Further information

- [Text of the directive as agreed by EP and Council negotiators](#)
- [Press release on the deal reached on 3 May 2016](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Dita Charanzová \(ALDE, CZ\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research: publications on web accessibility](#)
- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

## Vote on prolonging top-up in EU funding for projects in Greece and Cyprus

**Plans to prolong a 10% increase in the EU contribution towards project costs in Greece until 30 June of the year following the end of its economic adjustment programme will be put to the plenary vote on Tuesday. MEPs will also vote on a special provision whereby the EU would pay up to 85% of project costs in Cyprus until the closure of the 2014-2020 programmes.**

### *Background information*

Article 24 of the [Common Provisions Regulation](#) allows the EU Commission to make increased payments under European Structural and Investment Fund (ESFI) programmes - so called "top-ups" - to countries experiencing economic difficulties. As their national budgets cannot cope with the required national co-financing of agreed projects, they run the risk of losing EU funds all together, at times when they need it most.

*At a member state's request, interim payments may be increased by 10 percentage points above the co-financing rate applicable to each priority for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), European Social Fund (ESF) and the Cohesion Fund or to each measure for the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF).*

*These "top-ups" do not change the overall ESFI allocations in 2014-2020.*

*Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure*

[2016/0193\(COD\)](#)

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

[#Greece](#) [#Cyprus](#) [#ESFI](#)

## Further information

- [Procedure file](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur Iskra Mihaylova \(ALDE, BG\)](#)
- [Examples of projects and key achievements of Regional Policy](#)

# Plenary sessions

- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

## Debates on Iraq and Afghanistan

**MEPs will debate developments in Northern Iraq on Wednesday, as Iraqi forces, backed by allied forces and the Kurdish Peshmerga, fight to recapture Mosul from the terrorist organisation Daesh/IS. This will be followed by another debate on Afghanistan, and in particular the 4 October EU-Afghanistan joint commitment to step up cooperation on migration, as well as the European Parliament's role in ensuring democratic oversight of the new agreement. A resolution on Iraq will be voted on Thursday.**

On 17 October Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi announced the start of operation to retake the city of Mosul from Daesh. As intensive fighting could force many civilians to flee the city, MEPs are likely to ask the EU Council Presidency about the EU's role in ensuring humanitarian assistance and the next steps after the operation is over.

### Afghanistan

On 4 October the EU and Afghanistan signed a political arrangement to tackle the challenges of irregular migration. It lists a series of actions to be taken in order to ensure the rapid, effective and orderly return of Afghan nationals who do not fulfil EU entry or residence conditions and to facilitate their reintegration in Afghanistan.

The joint declaration was signed in the margins of Brussels Conference on Afghanistan, where 75 countries and 26 international organisations endorsed the Afghan government's reform agenda and pledged support of around €13.6 billion, one third of which will be contributed by the EU and its member states.

*Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*

*Debate: Wednesday, 26 October*

*Vote: Thursday, 27 October (Iraq)*

*#Iraq #Afghanistan*

### Further information

- [Joint way forward on migration issues between Afghanistan and the EU](#)

## Debate on developments in Belarus

**Developments in Belarus, including the September elections that returned the first two opposition MPs to its 110-seat Parliament since 1996, will be debated on Wednesday. MEPs are set to assess the possibility of Belarus MPs joining the Euronext EU-East European parliamentary forum and may reiterate their concerns about the safety of Ostrovets (Astravyets) nuclear power plant.**



# Plenary sessions

Given the release of political prisoners last year, President Alexander Lukashenko's role in hosting Ukraine-Russia peace talks and the lifting of most EU sanctions against Belarus in February 2016, MEPs will take stock of EU-Belarus relations and the country's prospects of joining the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly.

They are also likely to reiterate their safety concerns about the nuclear power plant that Russia's state nuclear corporation Rosatom is building for Belarus at Ostrovets, close to the EU border and just 45 km from the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius. The Ostrovets plant is scheduled to enter first-stage operation this year and full operation in 2018.

The resolution on Belarus will be voted at the next plenary session in November.

*Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (with resolution)*

*Debate: Wednesday, 26 October*

*Vote: November session (21-24 November)*

#Belarus

## Further information

- [Euronest parliamentary assembly](#)
- [EP Research note on safety of nuclear installations in Belarus \(June 2016\)](#)
- [EP Research note on Belarus \(March 2016\)](#)

## Press freedom in Turkey up for a debate

**Threats, violations and restrictions faced by journalists in Turkey will be debated on Wednesday afternoon. Since the 15 July failed coup d'état, which left 241 people dead and thousands injured, 90 journalists have been jailed, more than 2,500 have lost their jobs and arrest warrants have been issued against hundreds of media workers in the country.**

At the end of September the Turkish government shut down about 20 TV and radio channels for allegedly "spreading terrorist propaganda" before it prolonged the state of emergency declared following the coup attempt by 90 days (from 19 October).

Can Dündar, former editor-in-chief of Cumhuriyet, Turkey's top opposition daily, is one of the three finalists for the [Sakharov Prize 2016](#). Arrested last November after his newspaper reported on Turkey's intelligence service smuggling arms to rebels in Syria, he was later sentenced to five years and 10 months in prison for "revealing state secrets", survived an assassination attempt and now lives in exile.

*Procedure: Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy with resolution*

[2016/2935\(RSP\)](#)

*Debate: Wednesday, 26 October*

*Vote: Thursday, 27 October*

# Plenary sessions

#Turkey

## Further information

- [Procedure file](#)
- [Council of Europe - Platform to promote the protection of journalism and safety of journalists](#)
- [Mapping Media Freedom](#)
- [Delegation of the European Union to Turkey](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

## Making human rights work for migrants

**Ways to make migrants' human rights work in practice, such as giving women and children special protection in reception camps, setting up reintegration programmes for migrants returning to their countries of origin, and combating all forms of forced labour in host countries, will be debated on Monday and set out in a resolution to be voted on Tuesday. Almost 244 million people are currently considered international migrants.**

Migrants can help to "enhance diversity and cultural richness of receiving countries" and "remedy specific manpower shortages", says the draft resolution. But host states need to empower them to do so, by providing vocational training, language teaching and a contract in a language they understand, as well as ensuring safe and fair working conditions, it adds.

MEPs also ask the EU and the most highly developed third countries to work together to open up legal migration channels, as this "is the best way of preventing human trafficking and smuggling".

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

[2015/2316\(INI\)](#)

*Debate: Monday, 24 October*

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

*#humanrights #democracy*

## Further information

- [Draft report on human rights and migration in third countries](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur : Marie-Christine Vergiat \(GUE/NGL, FR\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

## Duty of EU firms to respect human rights: MEPs to call for EU rules

**Clear EU rules requiring firms established in EU member states or under their jurisdiction abroad to respect human rights in all their global operations must be laid down and enforced, urge MEPs in a draft resolution to be debated on Monday**

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**and voted on Tuesday. They also advocate creating a certified “abuse-free” product label at EU level to raise awareness of corporate social responsibility among producers and consumers.**

EU companies using raw materials or commodities that might originate from conflict-affected areas should provide complete information on the content and origin of products, say MEPs. They also call for the EU's export control law on civilian/military “dual use” items to be updated, since “technologies made by European companies are still causing human rights violations all over the world”.

*Procedure: non-legislative procedure*

[2015/2315\(INI\)](#)

*Debate: Monday, 24 October*

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

*#humanrights*

## Further information

- [Draft report on corporate liability for serious human rights abuses in third countries](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur: Ignazio CORRAO \(EFDD, IT\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [Interview of rapporteur Corrao on corporate liability and human rights ahead of plenary vote \(will be available here\)](#)
- [EPRS Briefing on Control of trade in dual-use items](#)
- [Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

## LNG and gas storage in the EU: Parliament to vote recommendations

**Ideas to ensure that the EU uses its liquefied natural gas (LNG) import handling capacity and gas storage capacity more efficiently will be set out in a debate on Monday and non-legislative resolution voted on Tuesday. The draft text also looks at measures to complete the single gas market and at using LNG as an alternative fuel in transport, heat and power.**

Parliament's recommendations for the EU's LNG and gas storage strategy will feed into EU Commission proposals for “Energy Union” legislation.

### ***Background for editors***

*The EU has plenty of spare Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import capacity (only 20% is currently used), yet the location of LNG terminals is not well distributed geographically.*

*The bulk of LNG import capacity is located in north-western Europe, the largest importers being Spain, France and the UK (and to a lesser extent Italy, Portugal, Belgium and the*

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*Netherlands). There is far less LNG capacity across central and Eastern Europe, where pipeline supplies remain heavily dependent on Russia.*

*LNG currently accounts for 13% of total gas imports to the EU, according to EU Commission and Parliament studies.*

*Almost all the natural gas imported by the EU comes through pipelines from Russia (39%), Norway (30 %) and Algeria (13 %). EU gas production has fallen considerably, including in the largest producer countries (UK and the Netherlands).*

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

[2016/2059\(INI\)](#)

*Debate: Monday, 24 October*

*Vote: Tuesday, 25 October*

#EnergyUnion #LNG

## Further information

- [Draft resolution on EU strategy for liquefied natural gas and gas storage](#)
- [Press release on committee vote \(26.09.2016\)](#)
- [Profile of rapporteur: Ándras Gyürk \(EPP, HU\)](#)
- [Procedure file](#)
- [EP Research Briefing \(June 2016\)](#)
- [Commission Q&A "Liquefied Natural Gas and gas storage will boost EU's energy security" \(16.02.2016\)](#)
- [EuroparlTV : Diversifying gas supplies for energy independence](#)
- [Audiovisual material for media](#)

## European volunteering: MEPs to call for end to the age limit

**The European Volunteering Service (EVS) should drop its age limit for volunteers and give them proof of skills acquired, to help them find jobs afterwards, MEPs will say in a debate with the EU Commission and a resolution to be voted on Thursday.**

Every year thousands of young European volunteers work abroad on EVS projects promoting social inclusion within local communities. Their tasks range from providing support to children, elderly people or migrants, to helping to run sports events, protect the environment or empower women. But even though the EVS is now 20 years old, its volunteers still lack a proper legal status defining their rights and responsibilities, says the draft resolution.

While the social and economic benefits of the European Volunteering Service (EVS) for local communities are clear, the lack of a legal status for volunteers and administrative red tape may deter many would-be volunteers, say MEPs. They ask EU member states to recognise volunteering as informal and non-formal education and to propose more volunteering opportunities and enhanced cooperation with volunteering organizations in

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neighbouring or other third countries.

MEPs also voice support for the Commission's new EU Solidarity Corps initiative, but stress that its implementation should not undermine the existing volunteering programmes and their funding.

*Procedure: oral question and non-legislative resolution*

[0-00017/201 \(oral question\) and 2016/2872\(RSP\) \(resolution\)](#)

*Debate: Thursday, 27 October*

*Vote: Thursday, 27 October*

#EVS20

[#EuropeanVoluntaryService](#)

## Further information

- [Question for oral answer to the Commission - European Voluntary Service](#)
- [Draft resolution on European Volunteering Service \(text not yet available\)](#)
- [European Youth Portal - European Volunteering Service](#)
- [EVS - factsheets and impacts](#)

## Other topics on the agenda

**Other topics for debate and votes include the following:**

- Union legal framework for customs infringements and sanctions, *Kallas (COD) debate Monday, vote Tuesday*
- How can the CAP improve job creation in rural areas?, *Andrieu (INI), debate and vote Thursday*
- Presentation of the Court of Auditors' annual report - 2015, *debate Wednesday In the presence of Klaus-Heiner Lehne, President of the Court of Auditors*
- Nuclear security and non-proliferation, *Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, debate Wednesday, vote Thursday*
- EU Youth Strategy 2013-2015, *Bocskor (INI), debate and vote Thursday*
- Fight against corruption and follow up of the CRIM resolution, *Ferrara (INI), debate Monday, vote Tuesday*
- Improving the connection and accessibility of the transport infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe, *Poreba (INI), debate Monday, vote Tuesday*

## Further information

- [Union legal framework for customs infringements and sanctions](#)
- [How can the CAP improve job creation in rural areas?](#)
- [EU Youth Strategy 2013-2015](#)
- [Fight against corruption and follow up of the CRIM resolution,](#)
- [Improving the connection and accessibility of the transport infrastructure in Central and Eastern Europe,](#)