



**DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2022; VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION IN OCTOBER II PLENARY SESSION**

### **The accession of Romania and Bulgaria to the Schengen area**

*Iratxe García Pérez - President of the S&D Group:*

Despite meeting the requirements, the Council continues to block Bulgaria and Romania's accession to Schengen. They've been kept waiting for 11 years without any objective reason. This kind of unequal treatment is a blemish on the EU's image. Patience has its limits, and our Bulgarian and Romanian friends deserve better. That is why the S&D Group made the request at the European Parliament leader's meeting to put the issue at the centre of next week's plenary agenda. During next week's debate, we will put pressure on the Council to unblock this unfair situation.

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**VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION ON WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2022; DEBATE HELD DURING THE LAST PLENARY**

### **The EU's response to the increase in energy prices in Europe**

*Mohammed Chahim - Vice-President of the S&D Group for energy:*

Energy markets are so dynamic that we need solutions that will calm them down and will lower the energy bills for our citizens and businesses. This is the utmost priority when it comes to tackling the current energy prices. Our Group was among the first to raise its voice about the huge problems with energy bills a year ago - long before the Russian invasion in Ukraine. A reform of the electricity market is much needed in order to sort things out after its failure. We call for a decoupling of the price of gas from electricity prices - this is key in reducing the volatility of electricity prices in the wholesale market. We have to put an end to speculations and manipulations in the gas market. We are in favour of a cap on imported gas from third countries. Also, we can consider the idea for joint procurement of energy resources following the model of the COVID-19 vaccines procurement. This would strengthen EU bargaining power in negotiations with third countries.

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**DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 5 OCTOBER 2022; VOTE ON THE RESOLUTION ON THURSDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2022**

### **Russia's escalation of the war of aggression against Ukraine**

*Vice-President of the S&D Group for foreign affairs*

Once again, Russia has escalated its war of aggression against Ukraine by announcing a partial mobilisation, threatening to use nuclear weapons of mass destruction, and hold totally illegal "referenda" in four regions of Ukraine currently under their occupation. Their result was written well in advance, and obviously does not represent the will of the people and has no value whatsoever. It is absolutely critical that the European Union remains united and keeps pressure on Russia's regime. Russia is violating Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and is responsible for immense suffering in Ukraine, and must pay the highest price!

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**DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2022**

### **Commission proposal for measures under the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation in the case of Hungary**

**Vice-President of the S&D Group for the rule of law**

There can be no way out for the Orbán government or its cosmetic changes: words are no longer enough. In next week's plenary debate we will be urging the Council to proceed swiftly with the adoption of the measures suggested by the Commission. If and when Orbán's government decides to implement the promised reforms, only then can the Commission re-evaluate the situation and consider whether funds can be unblocked. But until we see concrete change in Hungary, there is no more time to waste: the Council should take the decision to freeze the 7.5 billion euros for Hungary now.

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**DEBATE AND VOTE ON TUESDAY, 4 OCTOBER 2022**

### **Radio Equipment Directive: common charger for electronic devices**

**Vice-President of the S&D Group for innovation, AI and a strong digital Europe for all, and EP negotiator on the common charger**

I am very proud we made the common charger a reality. This is good for your budget and good for the environment, because it puts an end to the need to buy a new charger every time you buy a new electronic device. By autumn 2024, USB Type-C will become the common charging port for smartphones, tablets, e-readers, earbuds, keyboards, computer mice, portable navigation devices, digital cameras, headphones and headsets, handheld videogame consoles, and portable speakers. Thus consumers will be able to charge their devices with the same USB-C charger, regardless of the device or the brand. The new rule will start applying for laptops a bit later - from the beginning of 2026.

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**DEBATE ON MONDAY, 3 OCTOBER 2022; VOTE ON THURSDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2022**

### **Flexible assistance to territories (FAST-CARE)**

**Rovana Plumb - Vice-President of the S&D Group for cohesion policy and budgetary matters**

**Tsvetelina Penkova - S&D negotiator on the FAST-CARE package**

The Flexible Assistance to Territories (FAST-CARE) is a new legislation package that makes it possible for money from the EU Cohesion Policy to be used to the benefit of local authorities, civil society organisations, and member states hosting refugees. This is of particular importance for regions facing migratory flows and especially in the EU communities bordering Ukraine. The Cohesion Policy is here to help us tackle the consequences of Russian aggression on Ukrainian people in our territory. We have to be flexible and adapt the rules accordingly in order to spend money smart and make sure it reaches those that need it most.

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**S&D Group press conference**  
**Iratxe García Pérez, S&D president**  
**Tuesday 4 October, 10:00 - 10:20**  
**Daphne Caruana Galizia room - Strasbourg**  
**Weiss N-1/201**  
**Webstreaming here**  
**<https://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/>**

**Journalists who want to participate and ask questions can connect via this link**

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