



DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH

Preparation of the European Council meeting of 23-24 March*Iratxe García Pérez, president of the S&D Group*

For years, the reform of the EU fiscal rules has been one of the most complex European challenges. When adopting its annual report on the cycle of fiscal, economic, labour and social policy coordination within the EU, known as the European Semester, the European Parliament is set to urge EU member states to ensure quick progress on the reform. The outdated current rules had to be suspended to allow adequate reaction to several crises. They need to be reformed before coming back into force. Otherwise, we risk the return of austerity, which would increase inequalities and undermine the transition to a sustainable economy.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH

Deaths at sea: a common EU response to save lives and action to ensure safe and legal pathways*Elisabetta Gualmini - vice-president of the S&D Group*

The shipwreck that took the lives of more than 70 people, including children, off the coast of Italy was a humanitarian tragedy. But it seems that this tragedy could have been avoided. Giorgia Meloni's government has actively made search and rescue at sea more difficult by introducing stricter rules for NGOs carrying out much-needed rescue operations in the absence of state support. It is clear the Italian government failed to act until it was too late, and in the wake of this tragedy, we must have full transparency over the communication between the border agency, Frontex, and the Italian authorities. Beyond this catastrophe, it is time for Europe to agree a more human and sustainable approach to search and rescue in the EU. In next week's plenary debate in the European Parliament, our group will be making the clear case to use EU funds to save lives, instead of building walls.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 14 MARCH; VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH

Adequate minimum income ensuring active inclusion*Estrella Durá Ferrandis - S&D MEP and negotiator on the Parliament's resolution on adequate minimum income*

Next week, the European Parliament must call for a new European law that would guarantee an adequate minimum income in all EU member states. We have to ensure that everyone can live in dignity, provide adequate support for every person and every family in need, and end poverty. Key social actors, including trade unions and other civil society organisations, support our call for a European law. An adequate minimum income is indispensable, especially in times of social and economic crises, such as the one we are experiencing now.

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DEBATE ON MONDAY, 13 MARCH; VOTE ON TUESDAY, 14 MARCH

Binding annual greenhouse gas emission reductions by member states*Javi López - S&D MEP and negotiator on effort sharing regulation*

The European Parliament is set to take an important decision to slash greenhouse gas emissions from the EU's main economic sectors to allow the bloc to achieve its 2030 climate target. The S&D Group has successfully pushed for speeding up the emission-reductions efforts, already in the short term, as action to mitigate climate change cannot wait. We have also ensured that fairness and social justice were at the centre of the regulation. This will give a great signal to EU citizens, and to the world, that Europe is turning its climate promises into deeds, with a red heart.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 14 MARCH

Deterioration of democracy in Israel and consequences on the occupied territories

Pedro Marques - vice-president of the S&D Group

We strongly insisted and wanted this debate in plenary. Tens of thousands of people are protesting within and outside the country against a deeply controversial judicial reform, supported by Benjamin Netanyahu, that risks weakening the judiciary power, undermining the rule of law and deteriorating de facto democracy in Israel. Their protest is our protest.

The reform would, in fact, erode the independence of the Supreme Court by giving the governing coalition control over the appointment of judges – the power to overrule Supreme Court decisions with a simple majority of 61 votes out of 120 in the Knesset. A weakened Supreme Court could be also used to establish more settlements. We strongly protest and will do what we can to make our voice heard loud. To make things worse, since Netanyahu's far right government came into power, we have observed a dangerous escalation of violence between Palestinians and Israeli settlers in the occupied West Bank. We are witnessing an occupation that is dramatically turning into a de facto annexation of the settlement territories. This is not acceptable.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 14 MARCH; VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 15 MARCH

Implementation report on the agreement on the withdrawal of the UK from the EU

Pedro Silva Pereira - S&D MEP and EP rapporteur for the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement

In next week's plenary session, MEPs will debate the implementation of the Withdrawal Agreement of the UK from the EU, three years after its entry into force. The report evaluates the application of the commitments regarding citizens' rights and the implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol. The debate comes at an important time when the EU and the UK have just agreed, in principle, on the new Windsor Framework that aims to ease the application of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland. Parliament has already given an initial positive reaction to the new agreement, in particular its ability to safeguard the integrity of the EU single market while facilitating the flow of goods from Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The new green lane proposal was possible thanks to the flexible approach that vice-president Maroš Šefčovič took into these negotiations. Its full implementation now paves the way for a new chapter on relations between the EU and the UK. With the 25th anniversary taking place in a few weeks, the new framework marks an important signal that both sides remain fully committed to the Good Friday Agreement.

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S&D Group press conference
Iratxe García Pérez, S&D president
Tuesday, 14 March, 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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