



DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 11 JULY, VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY

Nature Restoration Law

César Luena – S&D MEP and European Parliament rapporteur on the matter

The S&D Group has been key to reaching a positive, balanced agreement to restore nature. With this law, the future of young generations and society as a whole will be secured. Farmers and fishermen will be able to keep their jobs, cities will be better prepared to fight climate change and Europe will fulfil its international obligations. I am confident we will win this vote.

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VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY

Establishment of the EU Ethics Body

Gabriele Bischoff – S&D Group vice-president and vice-chair of the European Parliament committee on constitutional affairs

The Commission's proposal for an EU Ethics Body is a missed opportunity. Next week, the European Parliament will take an official position to say that this proposal comes too late and is not ambitious enough. Both in 2021 and earlier this year, a majority of MEPs asked for an independent ethics body, with the right to start an investigation on its own initiative and with sufficient resources to do its job properly. There is significant room for improvement. The Socialists and Democrats are ready to play a constructive role in negotiating the Commission's proposal for an EU Ethics Body into better shape – once Parliament has adopted its mandate.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY, VOTE ON THURSDAY, 13 JULY

The need for EU action on search and rescue in the Mediterranean

Birgit Sippel – S&D MEP and spokesperson on home affairs

We urgently need a more coordinated and more proactive approach at EU level on search and rescue operations. Saving people in distress is not a political choice; it is a moral and legal obligation for all member states and the Union as a whole. On June 14, a vessel with 750 people on board capsized and sank. There are still many unanswered questions from this incident, in particular from the Greek government. Still, it is not the only unresolved catastrophe and member states must investigate every single one. We cannot accept the Mediterranean being a graveyard for vulnerable and desperate people seeking international protection. We hope Parliament sends a strong message to the Council and the Commission for reliable and permanent solutions at EU level.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY, VOTE ON THURSDAY, 13 JULY

Recommendations for reform of the European Parliament's rules on transparency, integrity, accountability and anti-corruption

Andreas Schieder – S&D spokesperson and negotiator in the European Parliament special committee on foreign interference

As S&Ds, we are fully committed to the fight against both corruption and foreign interference, which is why we have pushed for the reform to reinforce the rules on transparency, integrity, accountability and anti-corruption of this house. The recommendations by the EP's special committee on foreign interference (INGE) include an independent EU ethics body with real investigative powers, the obligation of asset declaration for all MEPs, a ban on paid side jobs for high-risk third countries, the obligation to publish all scheduled meetings with third parties, as well as much stricter obligations for organisations wishing to be involved with the European Parliament. This is positive, but not enough.

During the plenary vote next week, we will push for an up to 24-month 'cooling-off period' for MEPs at the end of their mandate if they want to take up lobbying activities. We urge the conservative European People's Party (EPP) and liberal Renew Europe (RE) to also support our amendment for a ban on all side jobs listed in the EU Transparency Register. MEPs should simply not be able to lobby on behalf of a company while holding a mandate. We must ensure the highest standards of transparency that the public expect from us!

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DEBATE ON MONDAY, 10 JULY, VOTE ON TUESDAY, 11 JULY

Protection of journalists and human rights defenders from manifestly unfounded or abusive court proceedings

Tiemo Wölken – S&D MEP and European Parliament rapporteur on the matter

Today, an increasing number of journalists, activists and human right defenders are under threat in the EU and around the world as victims of SLAPP lawsuits (strategic lawsuits against public participation). These unfounded and abusive legal actions – used by powerful individuals, companies and politicians – are increasingly dissuading critical voices from bringing issues of public interest to light. Journalists, watchdogs and rights defenders are a cornerstone of our democracies, and they should be able to work without being legally intimidated!

With this directive, we aim to set concrete rules to ensure EU-wide protection to those working in the public interest, by ensuring financial support for victims and extending the definition of cross-border cases, which apply when a defendant and claimant are not based in the member state of the court. Our courts cannot be playgrounds for the personal gain of the rich and powerful.

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VOTE ON TUESDAY, 11 JULY

The electoral law, the investigative committee and the rule of law in Poland

Juan Fernando López Aguilar – S&D MEP, European Parliament's rapporteur on the rule of law in Poland and chair of the EP committee on civil liberties, justice and home affairs

For eight years, the Law and Justice Party has been waging all-out war against the rule of law and fundamental rights in Poland. The unprecedented changes to the country's legal system are drastically undermining the rule of law and separation of powers, and the government's disregard for the rulings of the European Court of Justice show its clear unwillingness to respect EU law. With the recent legislative changes to the electoral law, a lack of judicial independence and the political capture of public media, we are concerned that the autumn elections will not be held to the highest democratic standards. In the resolution to be voted on next week, the Parliament will call for a full-scale election observation mission by the OSCE (Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights) in Poland. We must make sure that the elections are free and fair. We also urge the European Commission and the Council to use all available tools to defend democracy in Poland.

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Industrial Emissions Directive

Mohammed Chahim – S&D Group vice-president and negotiator on the matter

The IED is an essential piece of legislation to help us achieve our climate targets and our zero-pollution ambition. It ensures the continuous reduction of polluting emissions from the largest European industrial installations into the air, water and soil. This not only benefits our environment, but is also extremely important – health wise – to protect us from harmful emissions. When installations breach their permit conditions by exceeding the emission limits, we need to be able to impose adequate fines, make sure citizens are protected and are able to get compensation for health damage.

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S&D Group press conference
Iratxe García Pérez, S&D president
Tuesday, 11 July, 14:00 - 14:30
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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