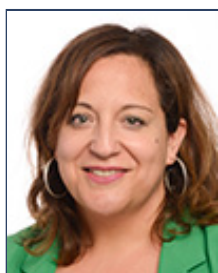




S&D Plenary Times



DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH

Preparation of the European Council meeting 21-22 March 2024 *Iratxe García Pérez, President of the S&D Group*

The values and principles of our European project are being threatened by those who, like Orbán, challenge support to Ukraine, rule of law and the European project altogether; those who, like Salvini, fail to condemn Putin's regime and the murder of Navalny and cheer for Trump notwithstanding his reckless plans to withdraw support to NATO and the transatlantic alliance; those who, like Wilders, threaten the constitution and aid to Ukraine; those who, like the EPP, fail to erect a barrier against the menace the far right poses to Europe. Socialists stand for rule of law, democracy and human rights. Europe must have the unity, strength and moral compass to be able to defend European security, the rules-based multilateral system and the UN Charter, in Ukraine, the Middle East and elsewhere.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH, VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH

Artificial Intelligence Act

Brando Benifei, S&D MEP and European Parliament's negotiator in the committee on the internal market and consumer protection

The growing integration of Artificial Intelligence into everyday life has raised both interest and concern about the ethics, data privacy and impact on employment. With the adoption of the AI Act, we want to make sure that no matter how this technology evolves, people's rights will be shielded. Thanks to the Socialists and Democrats, the world's first-ever regulation on AI will put human rights at the centre with Fundamental Rights Impact Assessments, for instance, when a bank assesses creditworthiness or grants health or life insurance. The new law will also ensure that labels on AI-generated content are clearly displayed. It will oblige companies using high-risk AI systems at the workplace to inform workers' representatives or give citizens the right to lodge a complaint using the collective redress procedure.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH, VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH

Single Permit Directive

Javier Moreno Sánchez, S&D MEP and European Parliament's negotiator in the committee on civil liberties, justice and home affairs

The revised Single Permit Directive shows the EU is capable of delivering more safe and legal routes for migrants. This is the most effective way to deal with irregular migration. Due to labour force shortages, European companies need to attract workers from outside the EU. However, we cannot allow workers' rights and working conditions to be undermined in the process. We are taking action to stop employers bending or breaking the rules, and now we have specific measures in place to fight abusive practices and improve working conditions of third-country workers.

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VOTE ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH

Industrial Emissions Directive

Mohammed Chahim, vice-president of the S&D Group for the Green Deal and negotiator on the matter

Industrial emissions into the air, water and soil pose a threat to the environment and our health. Stricter emission limits across a broad spectrum of heavy-polluting industries will prevent many premature deaths caused by asthma, bronchitis and cancer. The revised Industrial Emissions Directive, set to be adopted next week, will also encompass, for the first time, not only heavy pollutants like metals, cement, glass and chemical producers but also include large battery factories, mining activities and more pig and poultry farms than before. This revision allows the industry sufficient time to innovate – reducing harmful emissions and improving resource use, all while ensuring a level playing field.

Unfortunately, the EPP initiated the tabling of amendments to weaken the text and reduce the scope of the directive, having previously agreed to it in trilogues. If we can manage to keep the revised scope of the directive intact during next week's vote, it will be a win-win for people, the planet, and EU industry.

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DEBATE ON MONDAY, 11 MARCH, VOTE ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH

Green Claims Directive

Cyrus Engerer, S&D MEP and European Parliament's negotiator in the committee on the environment, public health and food safety

56% of EU consumers consider the environment when purchasing goods and services. However, more than half of the green claims on the market, such as 'eco-friendly' and 'green' are unreliable or even sometimes false. The Green Claims directive, to be voted on next week, will apply to explicit environmental claims made by traders about products placed on the market or put into service, including through online marketplaces, or traders and environmental labelling schemes in business-to-consumer commercial practices. For the S&Ds the goal is clear: make sure that consumers are well informed and not tricked. The path is also clear: we need prior verification carried out by independent verifiers, to limit claims on carbon offsetting and set appropriate penalties. No more greenwashing!

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH, VOTE EXPECTED ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH

The European Semester

Lina Gálvez Muñoz, S&D MEP and negotiator on the European semester for economic policy coordination: employment and social priorities for 2024

For the Socialists and Democrats, the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals must be the compass guiding the reforms and investments. Fairness and social rights must have the same importance as macroeconomic and environmental targets in a socio-ecological and economic model that improves the well-being of the people in the EU, while reducing socio-economic inequalities.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH, VOTE EXPECTED ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH

The European Semester

René Repasi, S&D MEP and European Parliament's rapporteur on the European Semester for economic policy coordination 2024

Substantial public and private investments are essential for fostering socially inclusive and sustainable growth – vital for the EU's future resilience. This is the main message of the annual European Parliament's report on the European semester, the cycle introduced during the financial crisis to better coordinate economic and employment policies of EU member states. The Socialists and Democrats ensured that this call for investments features prominently in the report. Against the background of the pending reform of the fiscal rules, the European semester becomes even more relevant so that we insist on strengthening the social dimension of the semester and the role of the European Parliament in holding the European Commission to account for its policy demands sent to member states in the context of the semester.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 MARCH, VOTE ON THURSDAY, 14 MARCH

The immediate risk of mass starvation in Gaza and the attacks on humanitarian aid deliveries

Pedro Marques, vice-president of the S&D Group for foreign affairs

In Gaza, where over 30,000 people have been killed and 70,000 injured, there is a catastrophic humanitarian situation and an imminent risk of mass famine and spread of diseases. Humanitarian aid is the lifeline for a population of two million, but its access to Gaza is being blocked. Adding to the terrible situation, last week, an effort to get food into northern Gaza turned deadly. As thousands of desperate Gazans descended on aid trucks, Israeli troops tasked with guarding those trucks opened fire. More than 100 people were killed and hundreds more were injured. This bloodbath shocked the world. As the international community, we have the obligation to urgently act to save civilians from starvation and violence. We reiterate our pressing call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and for full compliance with international law and international humanitarian law. A ceasefire is the only viable way for humanitarian aid to be distributed in an organised, predictable and safe manner. We also demand Israel to immediately and effectively implement the provisional measures indicated by the International Court of Justice on 26 January 2024.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 MARCH

International Women's Day

Robert Biedroń, S&D MEP, chair of the women's rights committee

It is appalling that in the 21st century women are being deprived of their hard-won rights and that the EU fails to protect them. In Poland, at least six women died because of fundamentalists and their barbaric laws on abortion, notably the de facto ban on abortion. Polish women voted them out in the last October elections, but we must make sure that such things will never happen again in Poland, or elsewhere on our continent. Unlike the conservatives, we do not use excuses or pretend not to have adequate tools. We are determined to win this fight and call for the EU Charter of Women's Rights – the catalogue of harmonised women's rights across the European Union – so all European women are properly protected and able to finally enjoy the same rights!

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S&D Group press conference
Iratxe García Pérez, S&D president
Tuesday, 12 March, 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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