

Plenary round-up – Brussels, April I 2019

Highlights of the April I plenary session included debates on the Future of Europe with Swedish Prime Minister, Stefan Löfven, and on UK withdrawal from the EU. Important debates also took place on several legislative proposals, and Members voted on proposals including the mobility package files debated during the March II plenary session on rules for posted road transport workers and on working conditions for drivers. Parliament also adopted first-reading positions on three further proposed funding programmes for the 2021-2027 period.

Common rules for the internal market for natural gas

Parliament debated and adopted a text agreed in trilogue on applying internal market rules to [gas pipelines entering the EU from countries outside the EU](#). Tighter rules will ensure that, while the EU Member State in which a pipeline arrives is responsible for applying EU law, the Commission must authorise negotiations on such projects, be kept informed of progress, and must authorise the signature of any such agreement.

Multiannual plan for western Mediterranean fisheries

Parliament approved (461 to 62, 101 abstentions) the [multiannual plan for the fisheries exploiting demersal stocks in the western Mediterranean](#) to protect stocks from over-exploitation.

EU citizens' identity and residence documents

Members approved a proposal to curb the fraudulent use of [EU citizens' identity and residence documents](#). The strengthened proposal should make it harder for criminals and terrorists to use EU identity papers, through clear rules on validity, recognition by Member States, and authorisation to handle biometric data.

Road infrastructure and safety management

Members held a debate and voted on the agreed text of a directive on [road infrastructure safety management](#), addressing shortcomings in the existing legislation to reduce both road fatalities and serious injuries by improving road infrastructure safety performance. It proposes key changes to strengthen safety management procedures and extends the scope beyond the trans-European transport network (TEN-T).

Pan-European personal pension product

Members debated and adopted a provisional agreement on the proposal to create a [pan-European personal pension product](#) (PEPP) – a new framework for voluntary pension contributions aiming to tackle the shortfall in pension provision in our ageing society. PEPPs are expected to offer greater choice in savings plans, including a switching service and a default option with a guaranteed return.

Work-life balance for parents and carers

Parliament adopted (490 to 82, 48 abstentions) the text of a new directive on [work-life balance for parents and carers](#) which proposes to redress the gender balance in the workplace. Introducing a right to two weeks paternity leave, while maintaining current maternity leave arrangements, the work-life balance package should give parents and carers more flexibility to care for their family by affording greater choice in who takes a break.

Opening of trilogue negotiations

No decisions to enter into negotiations were announced.

This 'at a glance' note is intended to review some of the highlights of the plenary part-session, and notably to follow up on key dossiers identified by EPRS. It does not aim to be exhaustive. For more detailed information on specific files, please see other EPRS products, notably our 'EU legislation in progress' briefings, and the plenary [minutes](#).

