

Plenary sessions

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Newsletter

3-6 October 2016

Strasbourg plenary session

Climate change: Parliament ready to ratify Paris agreement on Tuesday

The European Parliament is ready to ratify the worldwide climate change agreement, struck in Paris late last year, after EU ministers approved it on Friday 30 September. The consent vote is likely to be added to the plenary agenda as the first item at noon on Tuesday. Parliament's vote will pave the way for the Paris agreement on global climate protection to enter into force.

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Pre-summit debate on migration, Russia and EU trade policy

In preparation for the 20-21 October European Council summit of EU leaders, MEPs will discuss latest developments and progress on migration policy, key issues in international trade and future EU-Russia relations with Council and Commission representatives on Wednesday morning.

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MEPs to strengthen EU export ban on "torture goods"

New EU rules to prevent trade in goods and services that may contribute to torture or execution will be debated and put to a vote on Tuesday. In negotiations with member states on previous drafts, the European Parliament inserted a ban on the marketing and transit of equipment used for cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of people in third countries.

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Mobile roaming: are "fair use" safeguards fair?

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EP to debate progress of Greece's economic reforms

Parliament will hold a public debate with Commissioner Pierre Moscovici on Tuesday afternoon about the progress of Greece's economic adjustment programme, its impact

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2016-10-03>


Further information


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[EP Live](#)
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[EP Newshub](#)
[EPRS Plenary podcasts on key issues](#)

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Climate change: Parliament ready to ratify Paris agreement on Tuesday

The European Parliament is ready to ratify the worldwide climate change agreement, struck in Paris late last year, after EU ministers approved it on Friday 30 September. The consent vote is likely to be added to the plenary agenda as the first item at noon on Tuesday. Parliament's vote will pave the way for the Paris agreement on global climate protection to enter into force.

On Monday evening, the Environment Committee will meet at 19.00 to vote on its recommendations to plenary.

Next phase in Marrakesh

Parliament will also hold a debate on Wednesday with the Council and Commission on priorities for the next round of talks (COP22), to take place in Marrakesh in November.

In a draft resolution, MEPs stress the urgent and critically important need for all Parties to raise their emission reduction commitments. The EU should also commit to further emission reductions for 2030, they add.

Background

The [COP21 Agreement](#) will enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date on which at least 55 Parties (out of 197) to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the UN Depositary.

To date, 61 parties, including the US and China, have ratified the Convention, accounting for 47.79% of global GHG emissions.

Procedure: Oral question to Council and the Commission (with resolution)

[2016/2814\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October (COP22)

Vote: Thursday, 6 October (COP22)

#COP22 #ParisAgreement #ClimateChange #COP21

Further information

[Press release on committee vote COP 22 \(08.09.2016\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Giovanni La Via \(EPP, IT\)](#)

[Question for oral answer to the Council on 2016 UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco \(COP22\)](#)

[Question for oral answer to the Commission on 2016 UN Climate Change Conference in Marrakesh, Morocco \(COP22\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Audio-visual material for professionals](#)

Pre-summit debate on migration, Russia and EU trade policy

In preparation for the 20-21 October European Council summit of EU leaders, MEPs will discuss latest developments and progress on migration policy, key issues in international trade and future EU-Russia relations with Council and Commission representatives on Wednesday morning.

The EU heads of state or government will meet in Brussels, where Parliament's President Martin Schulz will deliver his address at the start of the Council meeting.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October

#euco #migrationEU #Russia #trade

Further information

[Agenda of the European Council meeting](#)

[EP resolution on relocation of refugees \(Press Release 15.09.2016\)](#)

[EP resolution on the State of EU-Russia relations \(Press Release 10.06.2015\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

MEPs to strengthen EU export ban on “torture goods”

New EU rules to prevent trade in goods and services that may contribute to torture or execution will be debated and put to a vote on Tuesday. In negotiations with member states on previous drafts, the European Parliament inserted a ban on the marketing and transit of equipment used for cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment of people in third countries.

Background

A key EU tool for fighting torture and the death penalty is [the 2005 Regulation](#) imposing restrictions on trade. This bans the export of goods which have no other practical use than execution or torture (e.g. electric chairs, automatic drug injection systems or spiked thumbscrews) and controls trade in products that have been designed for other purposes, but could be used for torture or execution (e.g. weapons designed for riot control, or certain anaesthetics used in lethal injections).

Despite achieving some results, the Regulation has been criticised for loopholes that allowed trade or brokering and advertising of such goods to continue. Responding to a [2010 Parliament resolution](#), the Commission adopted a legislative proposal to amend the Regulation in 2014. Parliament’s International Trade Committee [proposed several amendments](#) to further restrict the trade. The final compromise, adopted in three-way talks with the EU Commission and ministers, reflects most of the committee’s proposals, and needs now to be confirmed by Parliament as a whole. .

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure

[2014/0005\(COD\)](#)

Debate: Tuesday, October 4

Vote: Tuesday, October 4

Press conference: Tuesday, October 4 at 15.30 with Commissioner Cecilia Malmström

#StopTorture #trade #deathpenalty

Further information

[Compromise text agreed with member states](#)

[Press release on committee vote at the end of legislative trilogues \(07/2016\)](#)

[Amendments adopted by the EP on Council Regulation concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment \(10/2015\)](#)

[EP resolution of June 2010](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Marietje Schaake \(ALDE, NL\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EP Research Briefing: Fighting trade in tools for torture and executions \(09/2016\)](#)

Mobile roaming: are “fair use” safeguards fair?

Proposed “fair use” safeguards to prevent mobile phone users from taking unfair advantage of EU rules on zero roaming charges will be debated in plenary on Tuesday evening.

When agreeing on the "Roam like at Home" principle included in the telecoms package [approved by Parliament](#) in October 2015, the European Parliament and Council asked the EU Commission to develop supporting measures to make it work in practice. These included "fair use" mechanisms for operators to prevent “abusive or anomalous usage” of the system, such as the systematic resale of low-price SIM cards for permanent use in other countries.

The European Commission’s latest proposal on “fair use” rules was discussed in the Industry Committee on 26 September where some MEPs stressed the need to further clarify the “fair use” rules (“implementing act”) and strengthen data protection and consumer privacy. They also asked for details of the procedure for stopping abuse, operators’ tools for dealing with identified abuse and the role of national regulators in the process of enforcing the “fair use” policy.

Procedure: Commission statement

Debate: Tuesday, 4 October

#fairuse #roaming

Further information

[Watch the video recording of the debate in the Industry Committee \(26.09.2016\)](#)

[Industry Committee meeting documents](#)

[European Commission FAQ on fair use policy and other preparatory measures](#)

[Latest videos and photos](#)

MEPs to quiz Commission on conflicts of interest

Following several media reports to do with the business ties of past and present Commissioners, MEPs will quiz the Commission on Tuesday evening on how it plans to prevent conflicts of interest for its members.

Former Commission President José Manuel Barroso has been criticised this summer for taking up a post with the investment bank Goldman Sachs, as the non-executive chairman of its London-based international operations, the bank's largest subsidiary.

This move has prompted an intervention by the EU Ombudsman.

Procedure: Commission statement followed by debate

Debate: Tuesday, 4 October 2016

#ConflictofInterest #EUCommissioners

Further information

[Letter from EU Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly to Commission President Juncker - on the move by Mr Barroso](#)

[Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

EP to debate progress of Greece's economic reforms

Parliament will hold a public debate with Commissioner Pierre Moscovici on Tuesday afternoon about the progress of Greece's economic adjustment programme, its impact and the prospects for future negotiations between Greece and its creditors.

Parliament has been involved in the scrutiny of Greece's financial assistance programme, notably through its Financial Assistance Working Group led by Roberto Gualtieri (S&D, IT).

Background on the Financial Assistance Working Group

On 21 January 2016, the European Parliament's Conference of Presidents (EP President and political group leaders) approved a series of measures to increase the parliamentary scrutiny of financial assistance programmes at EU level. These measures notably included creating a Financial Assistance Working Group (FAWG) within the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, as well as fact-finding missions in programme countries.

Procedure: Commission statement followed by debate

[2016/2883\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Tuesday, 4 October

#ESM #Greece

Further information

[Press release following FAWG meeting with VP Dombrovskis and Commissioner Moscovici in Strasbourg \(11.04.2016\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Parliament to debate women's rights in Poland

Moves to make Poland's stringent sexual and reproductive health laws still more restrictive will be debated on Wednesday afternoon. MEPs are most concerned about Polish parliament bills on women's access to legal abortion and on the use of human embryos in In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) procedures.

Procedure: Commission statement followed by debate (without resolution)

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October

#abortion # IVF #InVitro #Poland #womensrights

Migration: MEPs to discuss Calais “jungle” camps

The situation in the informal migrant camps around Calais will be up for discussion in plenary on Tuesday afternoon. Visiting the area on 26 September, French President François Hollande said that the camp known as the “jungle” would be completely dismantled before the end of the year and called on the UK government to assist France in this task.

According to the French government, there are around 7,000 migrants and asylum-seekers living in the area and seeking access to the UK. NGOs put the figure at up to 10,000, of whom around 1,000 are unaccompanied minors.

Procedure: Commission statement

Debate: Tuesday, 4 October

#Calais #migrationEU #refugeecrisis

Further information

[Migration: MEPs assess refugee camps in Calais \(14.07.2016\)](#)

[Europarl TV: Inside the Nord-Pas-de-Calais refugee camps: the hardships of many women \(23.02.2016\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

Consumer health: MEPs to call for tougher safety assessment of materials in contact with food

The EU should further harmonise safety requirements for food contact materials, which are widely used in food packaging, kitchen utensils and tableware. Only a few of these have undergone sufficient checks on safety for human health, says a non-binding draft resolution to be put to a vote on Thursday.

Depending on their composition and properties, food contact materials (FCMs) may behave adversely and transfer their constituents when put in contact with food. In such cases, chemicals leaching from FCMs could endanger human health or change the composition of the foodstuffs, say MEPs.

Only four out of 17 listed food contact materials are currently covered by specific safety measures foreseen in existing EU legislation: plastics, ceramics, regenerated cellulose and “active and intelligent” materials.

Given the prevalence of FCMs on the EU market and the risk that they could pose to human health, the EU Commission should prioritise the drawing up of specific EU measures for paper and board, varnishes and coatings, metals and alloys, printing inks and adhesives, MEPs say.

Note to editors

According to a study by the European Parliament’s EPRS research department, a number of substances present in food contact materials have not been assessed, in particular for impurities in the finished material and/or possible chemical reactions with it.

The EPRS says there is a broad consensus among stakeholders that the lack of uniform measures is detrimental to public health and the protection of the environment, and to the smooth functioning of the internal market.

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

[2015/2259\(INI\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October

Vote: Thursday, 6 October

#FCMs #foodsafety #EUconsumers

Further information

[Draft report on the implementation of the Food Contact Materials Regulation](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Christel Schaldemose \(S&D, DK\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EP Research: European Implementation Assessment, Food Contact Materials - Regulation \(EC\) 1935/2004](#)

Debate on Syria and Colombia

Recent developments in Syria, including US - Russia attempts to revive the ceasefire, which broke down after the 19 September attack on a UN aid convoy, and a Syrian government offensive against Aleppo, will be debated on Wednesday afternoon. This will be followed by another debate on the Colombian peace process and the results of the 2 October referendum on a peace deal with FARC leftist rebels.

The conflict in Syria has cost more than 250,000 lives since it started in 2011, and over 4 million Syrians have been forced to seek security in neighbouring countries.

The resolution on Syria will be voted on Thursday.

Colombia

On 2 October, Colombians will hold a referendum to approve or reject the historic peace deal, struck on 23 June and signed on 26 September by Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos and Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) rebel leader Timoleon Jimenez, to end a 52-year civil war.

MEPs and Latin American members of parliament will be in Colombia to observe the referendum process.

Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October

Vote: Thursday, 6 October

#Syria #Colombia #EuroLat

Further information

[EP Research note on conflict in Syria \(January 2016\)](#)

[EP Research note on the Colombian peace process \(January 2016\)](#)

MEPs set to approve €9.3m in EU aid for redundant workers in Sweden and Finland

EU aid worth €5.3 million to help find new jobs for 1,441 workers made redundant by Microsoft and its suppliers in Finland and almost €4 million for 918 workers made redundant by Ericsson in Sweden will be put to a vote on Tuesday. The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) aid was approved by the EU Council of Ministers on 29 September.

The European Commission has proposed to give Finland €5,364,000 from the [European Globalisation Adjustment Fund \(EGF\)](#) to help 1,441 former workers at Microsoft and 8 of its suppliers and downstream producers to find new jobs. The main reason for the workforce reductions at Microsoft is the declining market share of its phones (Lumia) that use the Microsoft Windows operating system. Most of the Microsoft redundancies were in the Helsinki-Uusimaa, Etelä-Suomi and Länsi-Suomi regions.

The proposed contribution for Sweden amounts to €3,957,918 to find new jobs for 918 workers made redundant by Ericsson in Sweden in a context of stagnating growth and increasingly tough competition from Asian producers. These redundancies were due to the partial or entire closure of wireless telecom hardware production lines at various Ericsson sites (Borås, Karlskrona, Kista/Stockholm, Kumla, Linköping and Gothenburg) in Sweden, and the closure of an entire plant in the city of Katrineholm.

Background

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) was introduced in 2007 as a flexible instrument in the EU budget to provide support, under specific conditions, to workers who have lost their jobs as a result of mass redundancies caused by major changes in global trade (e.g. delocalisation to third countries).

The EGF contributes to packages of tailor-made services to help redundant workers find new jobs. Its annual ceiling is €150 million.

Redundant workers are offered measures such as support for business start-ups, job-search assistance, occupational guidance and various kinds of training.

Procedure: Budgetary

[2016/2214\(BUD\) - Sweden](#)

[2016/2211\(BUD\) - Finland](#)

Vote: Tuesday, 4 October

#EGF #EUBudget #Sweden #Finland @MicrosoftOy @ericsson

Further information

[Draft resolution \(Sweden\)](#)

[Draft resolution \(Finland\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Esteban González Pons \(EPP, ES\) \(Sweden\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Petri Sarvamaa \(EPP, FI\) \(Finland\)](#)

[Procedure file \(Finland\)](#)

[Procedure file \(Sweden\)](#)

[EGF website \(European Commission\)](#)

Vote on €1.65m EU aid for Greece to repair 2015 Ionian Islands earthquake damage

Parliament is set to approve €1,651,834 in EU Solidarity Fund aid on Tuesday to repair damage caused by earthquakes that hit the Ionian Islands region, and in particular Lefkada, northern parts of Ithaki and Kefalonia, , on 17 November 2015.

The earthquakes measured 6.1 on the Richter scale. Two people lost their lives, eight were wounded, and 120 houses were damaged. The Greek authorities reported extensive damage to infrastructure networks, buildings and cultural sites, with some of the most important tourist beaches destroyed on Lefkada.

The aid will help restore infrastructure, reimburse the cost of emergency measures and cover some of the clean-up operations. In April, a 10% advance was paid to Greece on the expected aid. The Council of Ministers approved the funding on 20 September.

Background

The European Union Solidarity Fund (EUSF) was set up to respond to major natural disasters and express European solidarity to disaster-stricken regions within Europe. The Fund was created in response to severe floods in Central Europe in the summer of 2002. Since then, it has been used for 70 disasters, including floods, forest fires, earthquakes, storms and drought. The EUSF has contributed more than €3.7 billion to 24 European countries to date.

Procedure: Budgetary

[2016/2165\(BUD\)](#)

Vote: Tuesday, 4 October

#EUSF #EUBudget #Greece #EUfunds #IonianIslands

Further information

[Draft resolution](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Georgios Kyrtos \(EPP, EL\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EUSF website \(European Commission\)](#)

Caterpillar, Alstom cases: vote on call to “reindustrialise” the EU

A call for a policy to “reindustrialise” the EU, in the wake of closure and redundancy plans announced by Caterpillar and Alstom, will be set out in a non-legislative resolution to be voted on Wednesday. In a September session debate, MEPs said that Europe needs a forward-looking industrial strategy to improve operating conditions for companies, make the best use of existing European financial instruments, and protect workers.

Many MEPs argued that the closures at Caterpillar and Alstom were a symptom of Europe’s industrial malaise. They deplored the absence of a long-term vision for European industry, while highlighting important factors affecting it, such as the financial and legislative frameworks for companies, globalisation, and worldwide competition.

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

Vote: Wednesday, 5 October

Debate: 14.09.2016

#Alstom #Caterpillar

Further information

[Video recording of debate \(click on 14.09.2016\)](#)

[EbS+ \(14.09.2016\)](#)

[Draft resolution on the need for a reindustrialisation policy \(will soon be available\):](#)

A free Interrail pass for your 18th birthday?

The idea of giving young Europeans free Interrail passes for their 18th birthdays, to enable them to explore and know Europe better, will be debated with the European Commission representatives on Tuesday. This idea has attracted growing public attention in recent weeks.

Interrail passes are railway tickets, which allow unlimited rail travel in and between all participating countries for a given period of time.

Procedure: Commission statement

Debate: Tuesday, 4 October

#FreeInterrail #interail

Further information

[Intervention of Manfred Weber \(EPP, DE\) at the 2016 State of the Union debate touching on the free pass idea](#)

Debate on acute political tensions in the Congo

MEPs will debate the deteriorating political situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo on Wednesday afternoon. Violence broke out last week in the capital Kinshasa during a march protesting against President Joseph Kabila's apparent intention to remain in power after his term ends in December. Deadly clashes between police and political protesters continue, claiming dozens of lives.

President Kabila is refusing to hold elections and cede power, despite months of warnings from the international community urging him to organise a free and fair election and allow for Congo's first peaceful and democratic transfer of power.

Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October

#Congo #RDC #DRC

Further information

[European Parliament resolution of 23 June 2016 on Massacres in eastern Congo 2016/2770\(RSP\)](#)

[EU-ACP resolution of 15 June on "the pre-electoral and security situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo"](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 10 March 2016 on the Democratic Republic of the Congo \(2016/2609\(RSP\)\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for professionals:](#)

MEPs to call for uniform fair treatment for EU fishermen

EU fisheries rules should be applied uniformly to all EU fishermen, so that they are treated fairly, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be debated on Monday and voted on Tuesday. Inspection procedures, e.g. for net mesh sizes and catches, should be standardized, as should penalties for infringements, it says. Introducing an EU “core curriculum” for training all fisheries inspectors, and using compatible real-time communication technologies EU wide would also help improve fairness, it adds.

MEPs are concerned about huge differences in national control methods, sanctions and the use of technologies as these create an environment where “for the same infraction the sanction may be either an administrative or a penal one.”

They ask that inspections be expanded to cover the entire production chain and that controls at sea be assigned to a single national administrative body.

The non-legislative resolution comes ahead of the upcoming revision of the [Control System Council Regulation](#) expected in 2017.

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

[2015/2093\(INI\)](#)

Debate: Monday, 3 October

Vote: Tuesday, 4 October

[#EUfisheries](#) [#fisheriescontrol](#)

Further information

[Draft resolution on how to make fisheries controls in Europe uniform](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Isabelle Thomas \(S&D, FR\)](#)

[EUROSTAT webpage on fishery statistics](#)

[Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

Widening the Transparency Register

A proposal to expand the Transparency Register - listing independent organisations and people whose business is to influence EU decision-taking processes - to the Council will be debated on Wednesday. A mandatory system covering all EU institutions is a reform eagerly awaited by MEPs.

Parliament and the Commission introduced a joint transparency register on 23 June 2011. From then on, and without waiting for other institutions to do likewise, Parliament made it mandatory for interest groups seeking accreditation to register beforehand.

Note to editors

In 2011, the European Parliament succeeded in introducing a joint lobbyists' register with the European Commission. (Before that Parliament had its own, voluntary system.)

From 2008, in various resolutions, Parliament called on other EU institutions also to opt for a mandatory register. The EP also took several further incentive measures, such as precluding any lobby representative not listed in the transparency register from speaking at its public hearings, and introducing a facilitated accreditation system.

Procedure: Statement by the Commission

[2016/2820\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 5 October

#EUTransparency

Further information

[Common Transparency Register](#)

[EP resolution \(08.05.2008\)](#)

[Framework for the activities of lobbyists in the EU institutions](#)

[EP resolution \(11.05.2011\)](#)

[EP resolution \(15.04.2014\)](#)

[EP Research Briefing – EU Transparency Register](#)

Human rights and democracy resolutions

Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights and democracy topics on Thursday 6 October, around 11:00, with the votes following at 12.00.

- Rwanda , the case of Victoire Ingabire
- Sudan
- Thailand, notably the case of Andy Hall

Procedure: non-legislative resolutions

Debates/votes: Thursday, 6 October

#humanrights #democracy

Other topics on the agenda

Other topics for debate and vote include the following>

- Legal aid for suspect and accused persons in criminal proceedings, *Dennis de Jong (GUE/NGL, NL), (COD), vote Tuesday*
- European Prosecutor and Eurojust, *debate Tuesday, vote Wednesday, Oral Question and Civil Liberties resolution*