

# Plenary sessions

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## Newsletter 29-30 November 2017 Plenary session Brussels

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2017-11-29>

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## Final vote on EU budget 2018

**MEPs will vote on a deal reached with the EU governments on the 2018 budget, aiming to offer better support to the young, boost growth and improve security.**

Parliament's [provisional deal](#) with the Council on the EU budget for 2018, struck on Saturday 18 November, will be debated on Wednesday and put to the vote on Thursday. Parliament's negotiators sought and won better support for unemployed young people and additional funding to boost key initiatives supporting SMEs, research and Erasmus+ student mobility.

The figures agreed in conciliation talks for the 2018 EU budget are €160.1 billion in commitment appropriations and €144.7 billion in payment appropriations.

More detailed information on the budget deal is available in the [press release](#) from 18 November, in the [elements for joint conclusions](#) and in [this briefing](#).

### **What are commitment and payment appropriations?**

Given the need to manage multiannual actions (e.g. financing a research project lasting 2-3 years), the EU budget distinguishes between commitment appropriations (the cost of all legal obligations contracted during the current financial year, possibly bearing consequences in the following years) and payment appropriations (money actually paid out during the current year, possibly to implement commitments entered into in previous years).

*Procedure: Budgetary [2017/2044\(BUD\)](#)*

*Debate: Wednesday, 29 November*

*Vote: Thursday, 30 November*

*Press conference: Thursday, 30 November at 13:00 with Jean Arthuis (ALDE, FR), Chair of the Committee on Budgets; Siegfried Muresan (EPP, RO) – General Rapporteur for the EU Budget 2018 and Günther Oettinger, Commissioner for the Budget & Human Resources*

*#EUBudget #EUBudget2018*

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## Further information

[Draft resolution on the joint text on the draft general budget of the EU for 2018 approved by the Conciliation Committee under the budgetary procedure](#)

[Press release on committee vote \(18.11.2017\)](#)

[Rapporteurs Siegfried Mureşan \(EPP, RO\) – Section III: Commission](#)

[Rapporteur Richard Ashworth \(ECR, UK\) – other sections](#)

[At a Glance: Conciliation agreement on the 2018 EU budget](#)

[European Parliament: Documents from the 2018 budgetary procedure](#)

[Committee on Budgets](#)

[Fact sheets on the European Union – The budgetary procedure](#)

[Budgetary powers of the European Parliament](#)

[The EU's budget for 2018](#)

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# Crackdown on cross-border VAT fraud, as part of wider tax overhaul

**MEPs will respond on Wednesday to EU Commission plans to crack down on VAT fraud. Reform could bring an extra €40 billion a year in revenue for member states.**

MEPs will give their views after the Commission unveils its “Fair Taxation Package II”, which is part of wide-ranging reforms aimed at simplifying and modernising VAT rules across the EU. Other measures are likely to include a simpler VAT system for small firms and an overhaul of rules on VAT rates.

The [Commission estimates](#) that EU member states lose around €50 billion per year through cross-border VAT fraud, up to 80% of which could be eliminated by the proposed reforms.

## **Cheaper, quicker cross-border VAT payments**

As part of the wider reforms for a more streamlined European VAT system, MEPs will vote on Thursday, on whether to extend the use of an online portal for firms to pay their VAT bills. The online “Mini One-Stop-Shop” (MOSS) -- an electronic registration and payment system originally introduced in 2015 -- would slash compliance costs for businesses supplying goods and services across Europe while, it is hoped, raising more VAT revenue for member states.

*Procedure: Commission statement; Consultation*

*[2017/2857(RSP)];*

*2016/0370(CNS)*

*2016/0371(CNS)*

*Debate: Wednesday, 29 November*

*Vote: Thursday, 30 November*

*#VAT #taxation*

## Further information

VAT Action Plan: Commission presents measures to modernise VAT in the EU

EP resolution “Towards a definitive VAT system and fighting VAT fraud” (24.11.2016)

EP Research study: Definitive VAT system and fighting VAT fraud

Draft report on Administrative cooperation and combating fraud in the field of value added tax

Press release on committee vote (09.10.2017)

Profile of rapporteur; Ludek Niedermayer (EPP, CZ)

Draft report on Value added tax obligations for supplies of services and distance sales of goods:

Press release on committee vote (09.10.2017)

Profile of rapporteur: Catalin Sorin Ivan (S&D, RO)

# EU trade deals: MEPs quiz Commission on impartial investment arbitration

## Plans to replace controversial private arbitration with an impartial and transparent multilateral court will be debated with Commissioner Malmström on Wednesday.

The way investors bring cases in trade conflicts governed by EU trade agreements must be reformed. Conflicts in trade partnerships, such as TTIP or CETA, should be dealt with by an international court, instead of a private ‘investor-to-state dispute settlement’ (ISDS) mechanism, MEPs are likely to argue.

ISDS systems, which are currently used most in trade deals across the world, are perceived as threatening states’ rights to legislate in favour of protecting health, safety or the environment. The systems are opaque, lack strong mechanisms to recognise appeals, and there are doubts about arbitrators’ impartiality. A multilateral investment court, by contrast, would be transparent, allow for appeals and come with a strict code of conduct for judges.

In a [July 2015 resolution on TTIP](#), the Parliament requested to replace ISDS with a new system. MEPs consider the [new investment protection rules in CETA](#) to be a stepping-stone to a fair international system.

On 13 September, [the EU Commission requested](#) to open negotiations for a multilateral investment court. The Council now has to decide whether it wants to give it the green light and, if so, what kind of negotiating instructions it will give to the Commission.

*Procedure: Oral question with debate*

*(B8-0611/2017)*

*Debate: Wednesday, 29 November*

*#CETA, TTIP*

## Further information

[Oral question on negotiations for a Convention establishing a multilateral court for the settlement of investment disputes](#)

[Legislative train schedule](#)

[EP Research At a glance: Prospects for a Multilateral Investment Court \(June, 2017\)](#)

[EP Research In-depth analysis: From arbitration to the investment court system \(ICS\), the evolution of CETA rules \(June, 2017\)](#)

[Factsheet on the multilateral investment court \(by the Commission, September, 2017\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)



# Supporting civilian tasks by the military

## **MEPs are set to approve the financing of civilian tasks by the military in third countries from a peace-building fund, but under strict conditions.**

The review of a key EU external assistance fund that has contributed to more than 275 stability and peace-building projects in 70 countries since 2014, will be debated by MEPs on Wednesday, followed by a vote on Thursday.

Through the “Instrument contributing to Peace and Stability”, the EU will support civilian tasks by the military in third countries with 100 million euros. This will include training, mentoring and advising military forces on human rights and protecting women and children, helping to build hospitals or develop IT and communication systems.

Under no condition can money from this fund be spent on building up foreign armies, buying weapons or training in combat techniques.

An [informal agreement](#) with Council was reached on 17 October.

### **Quick facts**

The Instrument contributing to Peace and Stability started out in 2014 with a budget of EUR 2.3 billion for 2014-2020, replacing the Instrument for Stability and several other instruments that focused on drugs, landmines, displaced people, crisis management, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Projects funded under the instrument include a sea water desalination plant in the Gaza strip, the training of civilian experts for crisis management missions and the deradicalisation of young people in Bangladesh.

*Procedure: Co-decision, 1st reading agreement*

*2016/0207(COD)*

*Debate: Wednesday, 29 November*

*Vote: Thursday, 30 November*

*#lcSP*

## Further information

[Draft rules on the instrument contributing to stability and peace \[AM 5 in 23\]](#)

[Press release on the confirmation vote in the committee \(06.11.2017\)](#)

[EP rapporteur Arnaud Danjean \(EPP, FR\)](#)

[Interactive map of EU funded projects](#)

[EP Research Service briefing on the EU's new approach to funding peace and security \(November 2017\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

## Yemen: MEPs call for EU strategy and arms embargo against Saudi Arabia

**A renewed push for a Yemeni peace initiative, an integrated EU strategy to support the country and an EU arms embargo against Saudi Arabia are the main demands MEPs will make to EU foreign policy chief on Wednesday afternoon.**

MEPs will call on all those involved in the conflict in Yemen to cease hostilities urgently and engage in a new round of UN-led peace negotiations. They are also likely to urge EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini to urgently propose an integrated EU strategy for Yemen - mainly consisting in facilitating a resumption of negotiations and implementing confidence-building measures - and to impose an EU arms embargo against Saudi Arabia.

[20.7 million people](#) are in need of humanitarian assistance in Yemen, one of the world's poorest nations, which has been devastated by a civil war since 2015. While ground fighting continues to rage in parts of the country, the threat of famine is increasing, creating the world's largest food security emergency. UN-led peace talks ended in August 2016 with no agreement and have been frozen since then.

The debate will be wrapped up by a resolution to be put to the vote on Thursday at around noon.

*Procedure: Non legislative resolution*

*2017/2849(RSP)*

*Debates: Wednesday 29 November*

*Votes: Thursday 30 November*

*#Yemen*

### Further information

[Draft joint motion for resolution on situation in Yemen](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EP Think Tank: Yemen: at a political crossroads](#)

[DG Expo Study: The Conflict in Yemen: Latest Developments \(October 2016\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)

# EU to adopt new rules on who bears banks' losses

## Plans for the EU to establish clear rules on the order in which troubled banks' creditors must cover losses will be debated and voted on Thursday.

The plan is to incorporate in EU law the international standard for total loss absorbing capacity (TLAC) of systematically important banks.

The TLAC requires globally important banks to set aside enough funds to absorb losses and recapitalise with minimum impact on taxpayers.

A credible bail-in “hierarchy” of shareholders and creditors to whom losses are allocated, harmonised across the EU member states, would help to protect critical bank functions and financial stability without taxpayers chipping in, says the text.

*Procedure: Co-decision (Ordinary Legislative Procedure), 1st reading agreement*

*2016/0363(COD)*

*Debate: Thursday, 30 December*

*Vote: Thursday, 30 December*

*#bankingpackage*

### Further information

[Draft resolution on the ranking of unsecured debt instruments in insolvency hierarchy](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Rapporteur; Gunnar Hökmark \(EPP, SE\)](#)

[At a glance: Ranking of bank creditors in insolvency](#)

# State of the Energy Union: MEPs to debate progress with Commission

## MEPs will debate the findings and proposals by the Commission in the Third Report on the State of the Energy Union.

The Commission wants the Energy Union to be a daily reality by 2019. Along with the [report](#), which the Commission presented on 24 November, the Commission will explain how the 2030 electricity interconnection target of 15% can be achieved, and discuss the third list of Projects of Common Interest (PCI) co-financed by the EU.

### Next steps towards completing the Energy Union

New rules on [Energy Performance of Buildings](#) are currently being negotiated between Parliament and EU member states.

The [Energy Efficiency](#) and the [Renewable Energy Directive](#) proposals were amended by the Industry, Research and Energy Committee on 28 November and will be voted on by plenary in January.

At a [High Level Conference on Clean Energy Financing](#) held in Parliament on 7 November, key energy market stakeholders discussed how to tackle the transition from carbon to more sustainable energy sources.

Three laws contributing to the setup of the Energy Union have already been introduced:

[Security of gas supply](#), [Intergovernmental agreements](#), [Energy efficiency labelling](#)

The Industry, Research and Energy Committee has yet to vote on amendments to the [Governance of the Energy Union](#), the set of rules governing the project, and the three electricity market files ([Risk-preparedness in the electricity sector](#), [Internal market for electricity. Recast](#), [Common rules for the internal market in electricity. Recast](#), [European Union Agency for the Cooperation of Energy Regulators. Recast](#)).

[Accelerating Clean Energy Innovation](#) is a non-legislative file ITRE MEPs are currently discussing in response to the [EC Communication from November 2016](#).

### Energy Union package

The Energy Union is a legislative package of measures designed to integrate the EU energy market, with initiatives to develop and use cleaner energy resources in member states, “decarbonise” the economy to cut CO2 emissions and reduce energy consumption.

The annual State of the Energy Union report shows progress made since the Energy Union Framework Strategy was adopted in 2015 to bring about the transition to a low-carbon, secure and competitive economy.

*Procedure: Commission statement*

*Debate: Tuesday, 29 November*

*#energyunion*

### **Further information**

[EC press release: 3rd state of the energy report \(24.11.2017\)](#)

[Questions and answers on the projects of common interest \(PCIs\) in energy and the electricity interconnection target](#)

[Work in progress in the committee on energy](#)

[Clean Energy Package – European Commission press release \(November 2016\)](#)

[High-level conference on clean energy financing: Main statements](#)

[EP Research Briefing: Assessing the state of the Energy Union \(May 2017\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)

# Disability Strategy: EU should do better

## Assessing the results of the European Disability Strategy so far, aimed at equal rights and full participation in society, MEPs say the EU can do better.

In a resolution to be discussed and put to a vote on Thursday, MEPs assess how much progress has been made in achieving the objectives of the Commission's [European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#), which focuses on eight priority areas: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health and external action.

Although the situation for persons with disabilities keeps improving in the EU, many things need to be improved. Thus, Parliament calls for the 112 emergency number to be made fully accessible for people with a disability, for positive discrimination on the job market and for all member states to fully enact all accessibility-related EU legislation.

### Quick facts

The report assesses the implementation of the Commission's [European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#) and lists key actions across the eight priority areas of the strategy: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health and external action.

The Commission's [European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#), adopted in 2010, builds on the [UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (UNCRPD), to which the EU is a party.

*Procedure: non-legislative resolution*

**[2017/2127\(INI\)](#)**

*Debate: Wednesday, 29 November*

*Vote: Thursday, 30 November*

### Further information

[Draft resolution on the implementation of the European Disability Strategy](#)

[Profile of the rapporteur Helga Stevens \(ECR, BE\)](#)

[EP Research briefing: The European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#)

## EU job-search aid for retail workers laid off in Finland and Greece

**Financial aid worth €5.4 million to help a total of 2,225 redundant Finnish and Greek workers find new jobs is up for a vote on Thursday.**

### Greece

725 former employees laid off in Greece by nine companies are eligible to receive EU support. The aid worth €2,949,150 comes from the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) and will help finance measures such as occupational guidance, training and help with business start-ups. The workers concerned had all been employed in supermarkets or retail shops, selling household appliances or food. Due to the economic crisis, the retailers suffered from the lower purchasing power of Greek households between 2008 and 2015.

More information in the [press release](#) following the committee vote.

### Finland

Due to increased online sales and the growing popularity of non-EU web-shops, Anttila and Stockmann, two Finnish department store chains, as well as the subsidiary Vallila Collection, were blighted by decreasing sales since 2014. A total of 1,660 employees had to be laid off, with Anttila and Vallila Collection having to shut down completely. 1,500 former staff will be supported in their search for a new job with €2,499,360, if the aid is approved.

More information in the [press release](#) following the committee vote.

*Procedure: budgetary*

*(Finland): [2017/2231\(BUD\)](#)*

*(Greece): [2017/2229\(BUD\)](#)*

*Vote: Thursday, 30 November*

*#EGF #Eubudget #EUfunds*



## Further information

[Draft report on the Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Finland](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Răzvan Popa \(S&D, RO\)](#)

[Draft report on the Mobilisation of the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund for Greece](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Marie-Pierre Vieu \(GUE/NGL, FR\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)