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12-15 March 2018

Strasbourg plenary session

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2018-03-12>

Further information

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[Press conferences and other events](#)
[EP Audiovisual website](#)
[EP Newshub](#)
[EPRS Plenary podcasts on key issues](#)

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EU's post-2020 budget must match its ambitions

The EU should boost research programmes and support young people and small firms, say MEPs in their draft negotiating position for the EU's next long-term EU budget, up for a debate on Tuesday and a vote on Wednesday.

The next [Multiannual Financial Framework](#) (MFF) should continue to support farming and regional policies, but also finance new priorities such as security, defence or migration and make up for any shortfall following the UK's departure, says the [draft text](#).

To take effect, the new budget needs Parliament's consent. MEPs warn that "no agreement can be concluded on the MFF without corresponding headway being made on own resources" – i.e. the revenue side of the EU budget. Expenditure and revenue should thus be treated as a single package.

Revenue

Besides the MFF text, Parliament will debate and vote on a [resolution](#) which advocates maintaining [existing own resources](#) and progressively introducing new ones such as a financial services tax, a share of tax from firms in the digital sector or environmental taxes. GNI-based direct contributions from EU member states should be reduced accordingly.

For further details on these draft positions see this [press release](#).

Background

- Over 94% of the EU budget goes to citizens, regions, cities, farmers and businesses. The EU's administrative expenses account for under 6% of the total, with salaries accounting for around half of that 6% (source: European Commission)
- A survey shows that Europeans expect solutions from the EU. Most respondents think that Europe should do more to tackle a wide range of issues, from security, to migration and unemployment (source: Eurobarometer).

Next steps

The two positions provide Parliament's input to Commission legislative proposals due in May 2018.

They call for talks between Parliament and the EU Commission and Council to start without delay, to try to reach an agreement before the European elections in 2019.

Debate: Tuesday, 13 March

Vote: Wednesday, 14 March

Procedure: Non-legislative resolutions

Press conference: Wednesday, 14 March at 14:00 (tbc)

#EUBudget #MFF

Further information

[MFF Q&A](#)

[Draft resolution on the next MFF: Preparing the Parliament's position on the MFF post-2020](#)

[Draft resolution on reform of the European Union's system of own resources](#)

[Press release on committee vote \(22.02.2018\)](#)

[Jan Olbrycht \(EPP, PL\), co-rapporteur for the MFF](#)

[Isabelle Thomas \(S&D, FR\), co-rapporteur for the MFF](#)

[Janusz Lewandowski \(EPP, PL\), co-rapporteur Own Resources](#)

[Gérard Deprez \(ALDE, BE\), co-rapporteur Own Resources](#)

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

[Procedure file \(Own resources\)](#)

[EP Think Tank briefing: "The European Council and the Multiannual Financial Framework"](#)

[EP Think Tank briefing: "The EU's next long-term budget \[What Think Tanks are thinking\]"](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Parliament to set out its vision for post-Brexit future

A resolution laying out the European Parliament's position on a possible framework for EU-UK future relations after Brexit will be debated on Tuesday and put to a vote on Wednesday. The vote comes ahead of the 22-23 March EU summit in Brussels.

The draft resolution, prepared by the European Parliament's [Brexit Steering Group](#) and approved by the Conference of Presidents (President and political group leaders), suggests that an association agreement between the EU and the UK could provide an appropriate framework for the future relationship.

It also stresses that the EU has binding common rules, common institutions and common supervisory, enforcement and adjudicatory mechanisms, which is meant to clarify that even closely aligned third countries with identical legislation cannot enjoy similar benefits or market access as EU member states.

EU heads of state or government are expected to approve the Council's guidelines for the negotiations on the UK's future relationship with the EU at the March meeting. MEPs will also debate other items on the summit agenda, such as jobs and competitiveness, taxation and EU external relations.

Debate: Tuesday, 13 March

Vote: Wednesday, 14 March

Procedure: Debate with Council and Commission, with a resolution

#Brexit #euco

Further information

[Draft resolution to wind up the debate on the framework of the future EU-UK relationship](#)
[Press release on Brexit: "Parliament to set out its vision for future EU-UK relations"](#)
(07.03.2018)
[Brexit news page](#)
[Infographic: "UK in the EU"](#)
[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

EU corporate taxation: overhaul to include digital firms and stamp out avoidance

In a bid to prevent firms moving their tax base to low-tax jurisdictions, MEPs will vote on Thursday on a major overhaul of the EU's corporate tax system.

The changes are set out in two complementary pieces of legislation: the Common Corporate Tax Base (CCTB) and the Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base (CCCTB) which together aim to create a single, clear and fair corporate tax regime in Europe.

The proposals include plans to ensure that firms pay taxes where they make their profits, introduce a single set of tax rules which would apply throughout the EU and use of digital data to help calculate tax liabilities.

Debate: Wednesday, 14 March

Vote: Thursday, 15 March

Procedure: Consultation

Press Conference: Wednesday, 14 March (tbc)

#Fairtaxation

Further information

[Press release on committee vote \(21.02.2018\)](#)

[Rapporteur Paul Tang \(S&D, NL\)](#)

[Rapporteur Alain Lamassoure \(EPP, FR\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[More information](#)

[Fiscal vocabulary made easy](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Safety of journalists and (mis)use of EU funds in Slovakia

Following the murder of investigative journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová, the safety of journalists in Slovakia and across the EU will be debated on Wednesday afternoon.

MEPs will also discuss Mr Kuciak's revelations in his last article, published posthumously, about alleged misuse of EU funds in Slovakia and potential links between organised crime groups and Slovak politicians. The debate will be wound up by a resolution to be voted on in the next plenary session.

Parliament also sent an ad-hoc delegation of six MEPs on a two-day fact-finding mission to Slovakia on Wednesday 7 March to look into the situation on the ground.

Parliament honoured the memory of Mr Kuciak and Ms Kušnírová with a minute's silence at its plenary session on 28 February. Its President Antonio Tajani strongly condemned the murders, stressing that the freedom of press must be ensured and calling on the Slovak authorities to "uncover the truth".

Debate: Wednesday, 14 March

Vote: April plenary

Procedure: Council and Commission statements followed by a debate and a resolution

#AllForJan #JanKuciak

Further information

[Minute of silence in memory of murdered journalist Ján Kuciak \(28.02.2018\)](#)

[Video: EP President Antonio Tajani on the murder of Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and a minute of silence \(28.02.2018\)](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Portuguese PM António Costa to debate future of Europe with MEPs

Prime Minister of Portugal António Costa will be the third EU leader to debate the future of Europe with MEPs on Wednesday morning.

[António Costa](#) was a Socialist MEP and Vice-President of the European Parliament from July 2004 to March 2005, when he resigned to become Minister of State and Home Affairs in Portugal. Amongst other political roles, Mr Costa was also Mayor of Lisbon for eight years. He became Prime Minister on 26 November 2015.

This will be the third of a series of debates between EU heads of state or government and MEPs on the future of the European Union, after Irish Taoiseach [Leo Varadkar](#) on 17 January and Croatian Prime Minister [Andrej Plenković](#) on 6 February.

EP President Antonio Tajani and Portugal's PM António Costa will give a joint press conference after the debate in plenary, at around 12.30.

The next future of Europe debate, with French President Emmanuel Macron, is scheduled for the April plenary session.

Debate: Wednesday, 14 March

Press conference: Wednesday, 14 March, at around 12.30, in Daphné Caruana Galizia room, LOW N-1/201

#FutureofEurope @antoniocostapm

Further information

[Biography of the Prime Minister of Portugal, António Costa](#)

[Future of Europe](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

US trade restrictions and how to protect EU jobs and business

Additional US duties on imported steel and aluminium and the EU's response will be debated with EU trade Commissioner Cecilia Malmström on Wednesday.

Speakers will discuss President Donald Trump's plans to impose new US duties on steel and aluminium imports, and the EU's planned [countermeasures](#), along with the possible impact on EU jobs, investment and prices and the mitigating measures needed to protect EU citizens.

Parliament's International Trade Committee was quick [to condemn the US move](#) and strongly support the EU Commission in giving a firm and immediate response that is in line with international trade law.

Spanish Olives

In a separate debate on Wednesday, MEPs are set to quiz the Commission on action planned after the US imposed new tariffs on imports of Spanish olives. A resolution will be put to the vote on Thursday.

Debate: Wednesday, 14 March

Vote: Thursday, 15 March (US tariffs on Spanish olives)

Procedure: Commission statement without resolution, Oral question to the Commission with resolution

Press conference: TBC

#

Further information

[Trade MEPs condemn US restrictions on steel and aluminium imports \(02.03.2018.\)](#)

[Oral question to the Commission on US attack on EU farm support under the CAP \(in the context of Spanish olives\)](#)

[Committee on International Trade](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

MEPs to vote on Luis De Guindos' candidature for ECB Vice-President

Spanish former finance minister Luis De Guindos' bid to become Vice-President of the European Central Bank will be put to a vote on Wednesday. But the nomination process must be improved, say MEPs.

Mr De Guindos' nomination was [approved](#) by the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee, on 27 February, but MEPs expressed reservations about the selection procedure, gender balance within the ECB, the timing of the appointment and the political independence of the nominee. They urged the Council to engage with Parliament to improve the process for future appointments.

Parliament is being consulted on the appointment decided by EU finance ministers, but has no formal right to veto it. Mr De Guindos became the only contender for the post as the only other candidate, Irish central banker Philip Lane, withdrew his candidature.

Vote: Wednesday, 13 March

Procedure: Consultation

Further information

[Draft report on the Council recommendation for appointment of the Vice-President of the European Central Bank](#)

[Press release after committee vote \(27.02.2018\)](#)

[Profile of the rapporteur: Roberto Gualtieri \(S&D, IT\)](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Promotion of Martin Selmayr to Commission Secretary-General

Following German civil servant Martin Selmayr's appointment as European Commission Secretary-General, MEPs are set to debate the integrity policy of the EU executive on Monday afternoon.

The move has drawn criticism from some MEPs, who want answers to questions about the transparency, integrity and accountability of the whole process.

Mr Selmayr previously served as cabinet chief to Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. He became Commission Secretary-General on 1 March, replacing Dutch civil servant Alexander Italianer as head of the institution's 32,000 strong workforce.

Debate: Monday, 12 March

Procedure: Commission statement

hashtags #

Further information

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Poorest EU regions: call for “ambitious” funding and tailored strategies

Projects that build cohesion among EU regions must remain a priority and be adequately funded, despite budget pressures on the EU budget, MEPs are to say on Monday.

Regional Development Committee MEPs stress that national public investment cuts are hurting low-income and low-growth regions that are already suffering from the adverse effects of the economic and financial crisis.

Besides EU priority funding, these regions need tailor-made strategies to close gaps and offer dynamic prospects to their populations, they add.

The draft resolution will be put to a plenary vote on Tuesday.

Background

The EU Commission published a [report on “Competitiveness in low-income and low-growth regions”](#) in April 2017. This focused on 47 regions lagging behind in 8 member states: “low-growth regions” with a GDP close to the EU average but low growth rates (in Italy, Spain, Greece and Portugal) and “low-income” regions with low GDP but with encouraging growth trends (in Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary and Poland).

Around one in six EU residents lives in a region lagging behind (83 million inhabitants) of which 32 million live in low-income regions and 51 million in low-growth regions.

Debate: Monday, 12 March

Vote: Tuesday, 13 March

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

#CohesionPolicy

Further information

[Draft resolution on lagging regions in the EU](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Michela GIUFFRIDA \(S&D, IT\)](#)

[EP Research Briefing note on “Measuring social progress in EU regions”](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

MEPs to demand that the Syrian regime halt the massacre in Ghouta

The Assad regime and its allies must stop shelling civilians in Ghouta, comply with the UN Security Council ceasefire resolution and allow in humanitarian aid, MEPs are likely to demand in a debate with the EU foreign policy chief Mogherini on Tuesday and a resolution to be voted on Thursday.

MEPs [debated](#) the humanitarian situation in Syria on 28 February. They condemned the shelling of eastern Ghouta, an enclave near Damascus populated by almost 400,000 civilians, that recently killed more than 550 people, including 120 children, women, the elderly and vulnerable.

MEPs urged the Syrian regime and its allies to halt the fighting, respect the humanitarian truce of at least 30 days and to allow the evacuation of the wounded and the most vulnerable, as demanded by the [United Nations Security Council on 24 February](#).

Debate: Wednesday, 28 February and Tuesday, 13 March

Vote: Thursday, 15 March

Procedure: Resolution

#Syria #Ghouta

Further information

[Video recording of the debate \(28.02.2018\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

EU-Cuba Joint Council: MEPs want trade and investment among EU priorities

MEPs will debate EU-Cuba cooperation priorities with Federica Mogherini on Tuesday afternoon, ahead of the first EU-Cuba Joint Council meeting.

Ahead of the first EU-Cuba Joint Council at ministerial level to take place before the summer in Brussels, and following the provisional entry into effect of the EU-Cuba [Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement](#) (PDCA), MEPs will quiz EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini on how EU priorities will be addressed in the new co-operation framework. MEPs' questions are likely to focus in particular on protecting EU firms against the effects of the US trade embargo, EU support for investment in Cuba, human rights in the country and inter-parliamentary relations.

The first ever EU-Cuba cooperation deal, [backed by the European Parliament in July 2017](#), provides for enhanced political dialogue, improved bilateral cooperation and joint action in multilateral fora.

In monitoring the implementation of the PDCA, MEPs will also pay particular attention to human rights and civil liberties in Cuba, and the role of Cuban civil society.

Debate: Tuesday, 13 March

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

#Cuba

Further information

[EP Research Study "EU-Cuba relations: a new chapter begins" \(July 2017\)](#)

[EP Research Study "EU-Cuba agreement" \(June 2017\)](#)

[EU-Cuba relations](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Vote on financial help to Georgia

MEPs will decide on a €45 million financial assistance package for Georgia on Wednesday.

The EU is set to provide €35 million in loans and €10 million in grants to help Tbilisi cover part of its external financing needs for 2017-2020.

MEPs, however, are likely to insist that the preconditions for this - respect for democracy, rule of law and human rights, along with efficient and transparent public financing and structural reforms - are regularly monitored by the Commission and the European External Action Service.

Disbursement should be temporarily suspended or cancelled if these preconditions are not met or the provisions of a [2014 EU-Georgia Association Agreement](#) are disregarded, say MEPs.

Background

This is the third time since 2008 that the EU has offered assistance to Georgia as it continues to face financial difficulties. Georgia joined the [EU's Eastern Partnership](#) in 2009 and the EU-Georgia Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area entered into force in September 2014. The EU is Georgia's main trading partner.

Vote: Wednesday, 14 March

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure

#Georgia

Further information

[Draft report on further macro financial assistance for Georgia](#)

[Press release on the committee vote \(20.02.2018.\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Profile of the rapporteur Hannu Takkula \(Alde, FI\)](#)

[Georgia and the EU \(by the EU Commission\)](#)

[Committee on International Trade](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Comparing cross-border parcel delivery prices

Consumers and companies will be able to compare the prices of having a parcel delivered to or from another EU country under draft rules to be put to the vote on Tuesday.

The rules would require cross-border parcel carriers to report their prices to national authorities and the EU Commission, which would publish them on a dedicated website, to enable consumers and companies to compare them more easily and thus help reduce unreasonable differences.

The Commission proposed the new rules, as part of the [e-commerce package](#), to boost opportunities to buy and sell goods and services across the EU. The text has provisionally been agreed by Parliament and Council negotiators.

A 2015 Commission [public consultation](#) found that over two thirds of consumers had given up making an online purchase because they felt that cross-border delivery costs were too high, and companies replying to a Eurobarometer [survey](#) that year agreed.

Debate: Monday, 12 March

Vote: Tuesday, 13 March

Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure, first reading agreement

#ecommerce #DSM

Further information

[The draft text agreed between EP and Council negotiators \(available soon\)](#)

[Press release on the agreement between EP and Council negotiators \(14.12.2017\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: Lucy Anderson \(S&D, UK\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EP Research: Cross-border parcel delivery services \(December 2017\)](#)

[Video on cross-border parcel delivery services](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Ending the EU-Comoros fisheries deal

MEPs are set to back plans to end the EU-Comoros Fisheries Agreement in a vote on Thursday, due to the Comoros' involvement in illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing.

The EU Commission [proposal](#) to terminate the agreement followed problems with piracy and the Comoros' failure to comply with the [Regulation on illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing \(IUU\)](#).

This would be the first time that the EU has terminated a fisheries agreement.

The [EU-Comoros fisheries partnership agreement](#) ran from 2005 to 2011 and then was tacitly renewed for 7 years.

“Negligible” economic and social impact

The economic and social impact of terminating the agreement “can be considered as negligible”, said fisheries Commissioner Karmenu Vella in a [reply](#) to a written question by EP rapporteur [João Ferreira \(GUE/NGL, PT\)](#), since EU vessels have been unable to fish in Comorian waters since 1 January 2017.

Background

Bilateral fisheries relations between the European Union (and its predecessors) and the Comoros date back to 1988. This fisheries agreement allows EU vessels, mainly from Spain, France and Portugal, to fish in the Comoros waters and is part of the tuna network fisheries agreements in the Indian Ocean.

Debate: Wednesday, 14 March

Vote: Thursday, 15 March

Procedure: Consent

#EUfisheries

Further information

[Rapporteur João Ferreira \(GUE/NGL, PT\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Briefing note international fisheries relations \(available in 23 languages\)](#)

[Audiovisual material for professionals](#)

Debate on violence against women and the ratification of the Istanbul Convention

MEPs are likely to urge member states that still haven't ratified the Council of Europe Istanbul Convention to do so, in a debate on Monday.

To date, only 17 EU member states have ratified the [Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence](#), known as the Istanbul Convention: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden. In a debate with the EU Commission and the Council, a majority of MEPs is set to urge remaining EU countries to ratify the convention as soon as possible.

The Istanbul Convention, the most comprehensive international treaty on fighting violence against women, was adopted by the Council of Europe in 2011. It entered into force in August 2014 and was signed by the EU in June 2017.

Debate: Monday, 12 March

Procedure: Council and Commission statements, without resolution

hashtags #

Further information

[Istanbul Convention: table of signatures and ratifications](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

Using EU trade deals to promote women's rights

EU trade deals should include provisions to ensure respect for human rights, including gender equality, say MEPs in a resolution to be debated on Monday and put to a vote on Tuesday.

MEPs will urge the EU Commission and Council to promote and support the inclusion of a dedicated Gender Chapter in all future EU trade agreements. Today, only 20% of such agreements mention women's rights, and only 40% include references designed to promote gender equality.

More specific measures to combat the exploitation of women and improve working and living conditions for those in export-oriented industries, such as garment and textile manufacturing or agriculture, are needed, MEPs believe.

Debate: Monday, 12 March

Vote: Tuesday, 13 March

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

#EUtrade

Further information

[Report on gender equality in EU trade agreements](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Profile of co-rapporteur Malin Björk \(GUE/NGL, SE\)](#)

[Profile of co-rapporteur Eleonora Forenza \(GUE/NGL, IT\)](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

MEPs to decide on the relocation of the European Medicines Agency

The legislation enabling the transfer of the European Medicines Agency (EMA) from London to Amsterdam will be put to a vote on Thursday.

The Environment Committee will first hold a vote on this issue on Monday evening.

The legislation stems from the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union, and the subsequent decision by the European Council to relocate the Agency to Amsterdam, Netherlands.

However, MEPs questioned the procedure, and sent a delegation to Amsterdam, where the Agency is to be relocated according to a decision by the Council, i.e. EU governments. The EMA building is yet to be constructed and the EMA will therefore first be housed in a temporary building. MEPs warned against any delays in the completion of the future headquarters.

Debate: Wednesday, 14 March

Vote: Wednesday, 14 March

Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure

Press conference: Wednesday, 14 March 15.30

#EMA

Further information

[Press release \(22.02.2018\): EMA workflow at risk if Amsterdam building is delayed, say MEPs](#)

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

[Procedure file](#)

[European Medicines Agency: A look at its activities and the way ahead](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

MEPs set to approve €2.1 million in EU aid for former tyre workers in Germany

Parliament is to give its green light on Wednesday to grant €2,165,231 in EU job search aid from the Globalisation Adjustment Fund to help 646 former employees of tyre manufacturer Goodyear in Germany to find new jobs.

Following the complete shutdown of Goodyear's production plant in Philippsburg in Baden-Württemberg due to competition from outside the EU, hundreds of dismissed tyre workers should benefit from job support measures like skills training or advisory services towards business start-ups.

More than a quarter of the redundant workers were between 55 and 64 years old. Around 300 of them are unskilled and have a migration background. "Active labour market measures co-funded by the EGF are all the more important for improving the chances of reintegration in the labour market of these groups", says the [draft report](#). The Goodyear plant was the largest employer in the region until now.

Next steps

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) aid is expected to be endorsed by the EU Council of Ministers on 12 March, and by plenary on 14 March. It can then take effect.

Background

The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund 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. In most cases, national authorities have already put the measures in place and will have their costs reimbursed by the EU when their applications are finally approved.

Vote: Wednesday, 14 March

Procedure: Budgetary

hashtags #EUBudget #EGF

Further information

[Press Release after committee vote \(08.03.2017\)](#)

[Steps of the procedure](#)

[Rapporteur Ingeborg Gräßle \(EPP, DE\)](#)

[EGF website](#)

Human rights and democracy resolutions

Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights, democracy and rule of law topics on Thursday 15 March, at around 10.00, with the votes following at 12.00.

- Situation in the Maldives
- The arrest of human rights defenders in Sudan, notably the case of Sakharov Prize Laureate Salih Mahmoud Osman
- Mercy killings in Uganda

Procedure: non-legislative resolutions

Debates and votes: Thursday, 15 March

#humanrights #democracy

Listing

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- International cooperation in the fight against cybercrime - the threat to public services, *topical debate Wed*
- Guidelines for the 2019 EU budget, *Viotti, debate Wednesday, vote Thu*
- Periodic training for professional drivers, *Lundgren (COD), debate Mon, vote Tue*
- Composition of special tax committee, *vote Wed*
- European Semester: Annual growth survey 2018 and social aspects, *Hetman; Bayet (INIs), debate Tue, vote Wed*
- Europass: Skills and qualifications framework, *Mann, Malinov (COD), debate Wed, vote Thu*
- Conflict Minerals: Implementation and accompanying measures (OQs), *debate Thu*