

Plenary sessions

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Newsletter

15-18 December 2014

Strasbourg plenary session

Setting the Commission's work priorities for 2015

MEPs will discuss the European Commission's 2015 work programme with its President Jean-Claude Juncker and Vice-president Frans Timmermans on Tuesday afternoon, after its adoption by the College of Commissioners in the morning.

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Final vote on 2015 budget and 2014 budget top-up

Parliament is to vote the EU's 2015 budget and top up funds for 2014 into law on Wednesday, sealing a provisional deal struck by budget negotiators for Parliament and the Council of Ministers on 8 December. Before the plenary vote, the deal must first be formally approved by the Council on Friday and then by Parliament's Budgets Committee on Monday.

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MEPs to debate priorities ahead of EU investment plan summit

MEPs will debate Commission plans to mobilise €315 billion to boost growth, jobs and competitiveness on Wednesday, the eve of the 18-19 December European Council meeting, where it will top the agenda. The Council will also discuss international developments and efforts to combat the Ebola virus outbreak.

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2014 LUX film prize to be awarded in Strasbourg

EP President Martin Schulz will announce the winner of this year's LUX Prize on Wednesday 17 December, in a ceremony in the Strasbourg plenary chamber at 11.50. This year's finalists are Class Enemy (Razredni sovražnik), by Rok Biček (Slovenia), Bande de filles, by Céline Sciamma (France) and Ida, by Paweł Pawlikowski (Poland/Denmark). MEPs can vote for their favourite film up until Tuesday.

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Parliament to elect European Ombudsman

Parliament will elect the European Ombudsman in a secret ballot on Tuesday. Since 1995, The European Ombudsman has investigated complaints about maladministration in all EU institutions and bodies. Current European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly (IE) is the only candidate for the post in the 2014-2019 parliamentary term.

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MEPs to vote on whether Palestine should be recognised as a state

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Other topics on the agenda

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2014-12-15>

Further information

[Draft agenda](#)
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[EP Audiovisual website](#)
[EP Newshub](#)

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Setting the Commission's work priorities for 2015

MEPs will discuss the European Commission's 2015 work programme with its President Jean-Claude Juncker and Vice-president Frans Timmermans on Tuesday afternoon, after its adoption by the College of Commissioners in the morning.

The work programme will show how the Commission plans to give practical effect to the political priorities set out by Mr Juncker in a statement and debate with MEPs before the European Parliament elected him Commission President on 15 July.

The CWP2015 was discussed in a working meeting with all Commissioners on 2 December, where Parliament's committee chairs highlighted their respective priorities for next year.

The Commission is also expected to announce the possible withdrawal of some pending proposals. EU treaty rules say that so long as the Council has not acted, the Commission may alter its proposal at any time during the procedures leading to the adoption of a Union act (Art. 293(2)).

Procedure: Statement by the Commission (without resolution)

[2014/2829\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Tuesday, 16 December

Press conference: (tbc)

#CWP2015 #teamjunckerEU @JunckerEU

Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[EP Committee Chairs and Commissioners discuss legislative priorities for 2015 \(2.12.2014\)](#)

[Political Guidelines: VOD on EP debate with Jean-Claude Juncker prior to his election as Commission President \(15.07.2014\)](#)

[Political Guidelines by Commission President Juncker \(full text\)](#)

[The Commission Work Programme - what for?](#)

Final vote on 2015 budget and 2014 budget top-up

Parliament is to vote the EU's 2015 budget and top up funds for 2014 into law on Wednesday, sealing a provisional deal struck by budget negotiators for Parliament and the Council of Ministers on 8 December. Before the plenary vote, the deal must first be formally approved by the Council on Friday and then by Parliament's Budgets Committee on Monday.

Parliament's priority has been to ensure that bills from various firms, organisations, and institutions in member states get paid.

At every year-end since 2010 ever more invoices have been rolled over for payment in the following year, causing difficulties for cash-strapped contractors of the EU and depleting available resources in that year. Parliament's negotiators ensure that, €4 billion more will be available to settle the most urgent bills for 2014 through an amending budget.

Parliament insisted on a payment plan that clearly defines a sustainable level for outstanding debt and proposing steps toward clearing the backlog.

For 2015, Parliament's negotiators secured more funding for small and medium-sized enterprises, education programmes like Erasmus+, for research and for the EU's humanitarian role.

The whole budget package for 2014-2015 also includes disaster relief for victims of floods, ice storms and earthquakes in 2013-2014.

Procedure: budget

Debate: Tuesday 16 December

Vote: Wednesday, 17 December

Press conference: Wednesday, 17 December 14:30

#EUBudget #Council @EP_Budgets

Further information

[Press release on reaching a compromise \(08.12.2014\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur 2015 - Commission: Eider Gardiazábal Rubial \(S&D, ES\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur 2015 - other sections: Monika Hohlmeier \(EPP, DE\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur 2014: Gérard Deprez \(ALDE, BE\)](#)

MEPs to debate priorities ahead of EU investment plan summit

MEPs will debate Commission plans to mobilise €315 billion to boost growth, jobs and competitiveness on Wednesday, the eve of the 18-19 December European Council meeting, where it will top the agenda. The Council will also discuss international developments and efforts to combat the Ebola virus outbreak.

Procedure: Commission and Council statements

Debate: Wednesday, 17 December

#euco #investEU #growth #competitiveness #Ebola

Further information

[Draft agenda of the European Council, 18-19 December, Brussels](#)

2014 LUX film prize to be awarded in Strasbourg

EP President Martin Schulz will announce the winner of this year's LUX Prize on Wednesday 17 December, in a ceremony in the Strasbourg plenary chamber at 11.50. This year's finalists are *Class Enemy* (Razredni sovražnik), by Rok Biček (Slovenia), *Bande de filles*, by Céline Sciamma (France) and *Ida*, by Paweł Pawlikowski (Poland/ Denmark). MEPs can vote for their favourite film up until Tuesday.

A press conference with the directors of the three films is scheduled for 15.00 on Wednesday, 17 December, in Strasbourg. Journalists will also be able to interview the three finalists before the award ceremony.

For interview requests, contact Eliana DRITSAS by email at eliana.dritsas@europarl.europa.eu or by phone at the following numbers: +32 498 98 35 76 (mobile) or +32 2 28 31012 (Brussels) and +33 3881 72051 (Strasbourg).

Procedure: Lux Prize

Award ceremony : Wednesday, 17 December at 11.50

Press conference: Wednesday, 17 December at 15.00

#LuxPrize

Further information

[Lux Prize website](#)

[Class enemy](#)

[Bande de filles](#)

[Ida](#)

[In the director's chair: Lux Film finalists on what inspired their films](#)

Parliament to elect European Ombudsman

Parliament will elect the European Ombudsman in a secret ballot on Tuesday. Since 1995, The European Ombudsman has investigated complaints about maladministration in all EU institutions and bodies. Current European Ombudsman Emily O'Reilly (IE) is the only candidate for the post in the 2014-2019 parliamentary term.

Emily O'Reilly was elected on 3 July 2013 after her predecessor, Nikiforos Diamandouros (Greece), retired.

In 2013, 2,420 complaints were registered, and all together 23,245 citizens were helped by the Ombudsman.

Procedure: Election of the Ombudsman

[2014/2092\(INS\)](#)

Vote: Tuesday, 16 December

Press conference: After the vote, (tbc)

[#EUOmbudsman](#) [#emilyoReilly](#) [@EUombudsman](#)

Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[The European Ombudsman website](#)

[Rule 219: Election of the Ombudsman](#)

[Rule 220: Activities of the Ombudsman](#)

[Video recording of the hearing \(2 December 2014\)](#)

MEPs to vote on whether Palestine should be recognised as a state

The European Parliament view on whether Palestine should be recognised as a state will be set out in a resolution to be voted on Wednesday afternoon.

Parliament's plenary debate on the issue with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs Federica Mogherini was held last month. Most speakers called for the European Parliament to vote a resolution on the question, in order to contribute to the Middle East peace process and promote the "two state solution".

Procedure: Statement by the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (with resolution)

2014/2964(RSP)

Debate: Wednesday, 26 November

Vote: Wednesday, 17 December

#Palestine

Further information

[Plenary debate on the recognition of Palestine statehood \(26.11.2014\)](#)

Vote on EU association deal with Georgia

Parliament is likely to grant its consent to the EU-Georgia Association Agreement on Thursday. The deal will establish deep political association and economic integration between the EU and Georgia, including the progressive opening up of their respective markets.

The deal is the third in the new generation of association agreements that the European Parliament is asked to ratify, after those with Ukraine and Moldova.

On Thursday MEPs will also adopt an accompanying resolution setting out their views on developments in Abkhazia and South Ossetia and also on relations with Russia.

Procedure: Consent and non-legislative resolution

Procedure Code: [2014/0086\(NLE\)](#) and [2014/2816\(INI\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 17 December

Vote: Thursday, 18 December

#Georgia #AssociationAgreement

Further information

[Draft recommendation on conclusion of the Association Agreement between the EU and Georgia](#)

[Draft resolution on situation in Georgia](#)

[Press release on committee vote \(17.11.2014\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Andrejs Mamikins \(S&D, LV\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Debate on CIA's use of torture and role of EU member states

US Senate revelations of the CIA's use of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of detainees in the wake of the 9/11 terrorist attacks, with the alleged complicity of some EU member states, will be debated with the Council and Commission on Wednesday, at 15.00.

The alleged use of European countries by the CIA for the transportation and illegal detention of prisoners was investigated by a European Parliament temporary committee set up in 2006.

In its final report, approved on 14 February 2007, Parliament deplored the passivity of some EU member states in the face of illegal CIA operations.

The CIA's "extraordinary rendition" programme "in the majority of cases, involved incommunicado detention and torture", said the text. This was confirmed by the victims - or their lawyers - who testified to the Parliament's committee.

A resolution will be put to a vote at February's plenary session (*tbc*).

Debate: Wednesday, 17 December

Vote: February (tbc)

#CIA #TortureReport

Further information

[European Parliament resolution on the alleged use of European countries by the CIA for the transportation and illegal detention of prisoners \(14.02.2007\)](#)

[European Parliament resolution on alleged transportation and illegal detention of prisoners in European countries by the CIA: follow-up of the European Parliament TDIP Committee report \(11.09.2012\)](#)

[European Parliament resolution on alleged transportation and illegal detention of prisoners in European countries by the CIA \(10.10.2013\)](#)

[Report released by the US Senate](#)

Debate on economic governance legislation

MEPs are set to debate the review of the economic governance legislation, also known as the “Six-pack” (stability and growth pact and macroeconomic surveillance) and “Two-pack” (excessive deficit and financial stability), with the Commission and Council on Tuesday morning.

Commissioner Pierre Moscovici underlined to the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee on 2 December that experience with this relatively new legislation is limited and that the Commission sees the review document as the start of dialogue and debate on the appropriate way forward in the coming months.

MEPs are expected to urge the Commission to not to make special concessions to individual countries when applying the excessive debt procedure and are also likely to ask for clear criteria for treating countries differently.

Procedure: Commission statement (without resolution)

Procedure Code: [2014/2938\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Tuesday, 16 December

#economy #EU

Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[The European Semester: Main steps at the EU level](#)

[Economic Governance as part of the European Semester Cycle \("6 and 2-pack"\) - April 2014](#)

[Stability and Growth Pact - An Overview](#)

[Implementation of Country Specific Recommendations](#)

[The legal nature of Country Specific Recommendations](#)

[The Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure - An overview](#)

[Key features of 2015 Draft Budgetary Plans \(DBP\) - December 2014](#)

[Economic Dialogue with Commissioner P. Moscovici on 2 December on 2015 DBPs](#)

Vote on €35.5 million for redundant workers in France, Poland, Italy and Greece

Parliament votes Tuesday on four applications for €35.5 million in EU aid to help find or create new jobs for workers made redundant by Air France, Fiat Auto Poland, Whirlpool in Italy and a Greek retailer. The European Globalisation Adjustment Fund (EGF) aid applications need to be approved by both Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

Country	Company	Number of redundancies	EGF aid amount (€)	Sector	Rapporteur
France	Air France	3,886	25,937,813	air transport	Marco Zanni (EFDD, IT)
Greece	O d y s s e f s F o k a s	600	6,444,000	retail	Monica Vana (Greens/EFA, AT)
Italy	Whirlpool, 5 suppliers and downstream producers	608	1,890,000	d o m e s t i c e l e c t r i c a l e q u i p m e n t	Danielle Viotti (S&D, IT)
Poland	F i a t , 2 1 suppliers and downstream producers	777	1,259,610	automotive	Jan Olbrycht (EPP, PL)

Procedure: Budgetary

Procedure Codes: 2014/2185(BUD) (Air France); 2014/2183(BUD) (Odyssefs Fokas); 2014/2170(BUD) (Whirlpool Italy); 2014/2181(BUD) (Fiat Auto Poland)

Vote: Tuesday, 16 December

#EGF #France @airfrance #Italy #Greece #Poland

Further information

[Press release on committee vote \(11.12.14\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: Marco Zanni](#)

[Procedure file Air France](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: Monika Vana](#)

[Procedure file Odyssefs Fokas](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: Daniele Viotti](#)

[Procedure file Whirlpool](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: Jan Olbrycht](#)

[Procedure file Fiat](#)

[The Commission's EGF page](#)

[EP think tank backgrounder](#)

Vote on plans to waive EU import duties on fruit from Moldova

MEPs are likely to back plans to suspend duties on EU imports of certain amounts of grapes, apples and plums from Moldova, as a temporary and exceptional measure to offset the damage done to its struggling economy by Russia's agricultural import ban, in a vote on Wednesday.

Moldova will be able to export up to 40,000 tonnes of fresh apples, 10,000 tonnes of fresh table grapes and 10,000 tonnes of fresh plums to the EU duty free.

This concession comes on top of trade preferences granted to Moldova as part of the “deep and comprehensive free trade area” with the EU, established by the EU-Moldova association agreement, which the European Parliament ratified last month.

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure

Procedure Code: [2014/0250\(COD\)](#)

Debate: Tuesday, 16 December

Vote: Wednesday, 17 December

#Moldova #Russianban

Further information

[Draft report on introducing autonomous trade preferences for Moldova](#)

[Press release – EP backs EU-Moldova association deal \(13.11.2014\)](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Sorin Moisa \(S&D, RO\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Parliament to vote on €126.7 million in natural disaster relief aid

Parliament votes Wednesday on seven applications for a total of €126.7 million in EU aid to help Italy, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and Bulgaria to cope with the aftermath of natural disasters in 2013 and 2014. The European Solidarity Fund (EUSF) aid applications need to be approved by both Parliament and the Council of Ministers.

Disaster	Direct damage (€)	Total amount of aid proposed (€)
Italy flooding	652,418,691	16,310,467
Greece earthquake	147,332,790	3,683,320
Slovenia ice / storm	428,733,722	18,388,478
Croatia ice /flooding	291,904,630	8,616,263
Serbia	1,105,622,000	60,224,605
Croatia	297,629,000	8,959,725
Bulgaria	311,328,000	10,542,110
TOTAL		126,724,968

Procedure: Budgetary

Procedure Codes: 2014/2072(BUD); 2014/2161(BUD)

Votess: Wednesday 17 December

#EuSF #Italy #Greece #Slovenia #Croatia

Further information

[Draft resolution on Italy, Greece, Slovenia and Croatia](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: Patricija Šulin \(EPP, SL\)](#)

[Commission press release \(27.08.2014\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Draft resolution on Serbia, Croatia and Bulgaria](#)

[Profile of rapporteur: José Manuel Fernandes \(EPP, PT\)](#)

[Commission press release \(10.10.2014\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Banking Union: Parliament to vote on Single Resolution Board members

A plenary vote on candidate members of the Single Resolution Board (SRB), which is to restructure failing banks, is scheduled for Tuesday. However, Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee will first need to approve the candidates in a vote at an extraordinary meeting on Monday evening.

The candidates were nominated by the European Commission on 5 December, following several in-camera hearings with shortlisted candidates.

Public hearings with the candidates nominated by the Commission were held in Parliament last Monday and Tuesday.

The candidates are:

- Ms Elke König (DE) for the Chair position
- Mr Timo Löytyniemi (FI) for the Vice-Chair position
- Mr Mauro Grande (IT)
- Mr Antonio Carrascosa (ES)
- Ms Joanne Kellermann (NL)
- Mr Dominique Laboureix (FR)

If Parliament approves the Commission's proposed candidate for each of the six posts, then it will be up to the Council (acting by qualified majority) to decide on the appointments.

The Chair, Vice-Chair and Board Members are appointed for a limited term; the Chair for an initial three years, renewable once for a further five years; and the Vice-Chair and Board Members for five years, non-renewable.

Procedure: Consultation

Procedure Code: 2014/0901(NLE)

Vote: Tuesday, 16 December

#SRB #BankingUnion

Further information

[Briefing on the Single Resolution Mechanism \(SRM\) and Single Resolution Fund \(SRF\):
Main Elements of the Banking Union](#)
[Recapitalisations - BRRD provisions and State Aid rules](#)

Tar sands: MEPs set to vote on new EU fuel quality rules

A proposed revision of EU fuel quality rules that disregards the fact that extracting oil from tar sands causes more greenhouse gas emissions than conventional oil drilling will be put to a vote on Wednesday. The Environment Committee rejected the rules on 3 December because they do not include a methodology for assessing emissions from unconventional sources.

The existing EU fuel quality directive requires suppliers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the life cycle of their fuels by at least 6% by 2020 (compared to 2010).

The committee argued that failing to stipulate specific greenhouse gas reduction targets for tar sand oil, as distinct from conventional crude, would lead to an increase in its share of the EU market.

Given that exploiting tar sand oil causes more pollution than conventional drilling, increasing its market share would cause more damage to the environment and aggravate climate change, it said.

Procedure:

Procedure Code: 2014/2931 RPS

Debate/vote: Wednesday, 17 December

#fuel

Further information

[Profil of the rapporteur, Bas Eickhout \(Verts/ALE\)](#)

[Profil of the rapporteur, Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy \(ALDE\)](#)

MEPs to call for joined-up thinking on migration

MEPs' ideas on how to prevent further deaths in the Mediterranean and develop a holistic EU approach to migration are set out in a draft resolution to be voted on Wednesday. They include ensuring solidarity and fair sharing of responsibilities among EU member states, fulfilling sea search and rescue duties, exploring safe and legal routes into the EU for asylum seekers and tackling people smugglers and traffickers.

The draft resolution was tabled by the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee on 11 December, after Parliament as a whole debated the issues on 25 November. Studies show that up to 22,000 lives have been lost in the Mediterranean over the past 26 years.

Council and Commission representatives will be invited to a debate on Wednesday on the recently-launched "Khartoum Process", in which the EU, Horn of Africa countries and irregular migration transit countries discuss human trafficking and people smuggling.

These talks, opened by EU foreign affairs chief Federica Mogherini on 28 November, launched an "EU-Horn of Africa Migration Route Initiative" which aims to provide a political framework for migration measures in the coming years.

Procedure: non-binding resolution, Commission and Council statements without resolution

Procedure Code: 2014/2907(RSP)

Debate in plenary 25 November 2014

Debate/vote: Wednesday, 17 December

#migration #asylum #fundamentalrights #Frontex #Triton

Further information

[Video recording of the debate in plenary \(25.11.2014\)](#)

[Press release - Operation Triton: Civil Liberties Committee Chair will push for inquiry into policies and resources utilised by member states in the Mediterranean](#)

[European Parliament resolution of 23 October 2013 on migratory flows in the Mediterranean, with particular attention to the tragic events off Lampedusa](#)

[Press release - Migration: EU must act to prevent further tragedies, says Parliament \(23.10.2013\)](#)

Steel: MEPs to call for new industrial policy

MEPs are expected to demand a new industrial policy to help the EU steel industry to meet global market challenges and protect its workers, in a non-binding resolution to be voted on Wednesday. The EU steel sector is struggling with declining demand and tough competition from third countries.

At the last plenary session, MEPs debated how to protect the steel industry and workers with Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs Elżbieta Bieńkowska.

Some called for a new industrial policy for steel, anti-dumping measures against imports and innovative restructuring of steel producers in Austria, France, Belgium, Greece, Poland, Slovakia, Romania and Italy.

EU steel industry jobs fell from 1 million in 1970 to around 369,000 in 2012.

Procedure: Non-legislative resolution

Procedure Code: [2014/2976\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 26 November

Vote: Wednesday 17 December

#steel #industry

Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[Video recording of debate \(26.11.2014\)](#)

Focusing EU security strategy on emerging threats

EU nationals who join terrorist organisations abroad and later return home, cyber-security, human trafficking, organised crime, money laundering and corruption should be priority areas for the new EU Internal Security Strategy (ISS) for 2015-2019, says a draft resolution to be voted on Wednesday. The new ISS should be "easily adaptable" to address emerging security threats, as well as existing ones, says the text.

The resolution is Parliament's input to the new EU Internal Security Strategy (ISS) being prepared by the European Commission for 2015-2019.

Procedure: Non-binding resolution

Procedure Code:[2014/2918\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Tuesday, 16 December

Vote: Wednesday, 17 December

#cybersecurity #humantrafficking #organisedcrime #moneylaundering #corruption

Further information

[Draft motion for a resolution](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Human rights and democracy resolutions

Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following topics relating to human rights and democracy, on the morning of Thursday 18 December, with the votes following at around noon.

- Venezuela: persecution of the democratic opposition
- Mauritania, in particular the case of Biram Dah Abeid
- Sudan, the case of Dr. Amin Mekki Medani

#humanrights

Other topics on the agenda

Other topics for discussion and debate include the following:

- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), resolution, *debate Monday, vote Tuesday*
- Assessment of good repute of transport operators (rejection of comitology measure), Commission statement, *debate Monday, vote Tuesday*
- Mobilisation of flexibility instrument for Cyprus, *vote Wednesday*
- Critical food shortage for Syrian refugees, Council and Commission statements, *debate Tuesday*