

Newsletter

27-28 April 2016

Brussels plenary session

Migration: debate on roll-out of the EU-Turkey deal

The implementation of the EU-Turkey agreement on migration, its legal aspects and democratic control, will be debated by MEPs, EU Commission First Vice-President Frans Timmermans and Dutch Minister for Immigration Klaas Dijkhoff on Thursday morning, starting at 8.30. MEPs have voiced concerns about the agreement's compliance with EU and international law, as well as the difficulties of putting it into practice.

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Removing technical obstacles to creating a single EU railway area

Draft rules designed to overcome obstacles to creating a single EU railway area will be debated and voted on Thursday. These rules, in part one of the "4th railway package" agreed with EU ministers in June 2015, tackle obstacles that are due to differences among national railway standards and procedures. They cover interoperability, safety and the role of the European Railway Agency (ERA).

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Financial markets: MEPs aim to make LIBOR and other benchmarks more trustworthy

"Critical" benchmarks such as the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) and the Euro Interbank Offered Rate (EURIBOR), influencing financial instruments and contracts with an average value of at least €500 billion, should become more reliable when Parliament votes in new legislation on Thursday. The law aims to clean up the benchmark-setting process, improve transparency, and prevent conflicts of interest like those that led to the LIBOR rigging scandals of recent years.

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Protecting children's best interests in cross-border custody disputes

Measures to better protect the best interests of children in cross-border parental custody disputes, adoption decisions and abductions by parents within the EU will be debated by MEPs, Commissioner Věra Jourová and Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert for the Council Presidency on Wednesday and wrapped up in a non-binding resolution to be voted on Thursday.

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2016-04-27>

Further information

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

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Migration: debate on roll-out of the EU-Turkey deal

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Note to editors

The EU-Turkey deal was also debated in plenary session on 13 April in Strasbourg and in the Civil Liberties Committee on 7 April. On 21 April, the Civil Liberties Committee debated visa liberalisation for Turkey, also in the context of the migration deal.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements

[2016/2666\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Thursday, 28 April

[#EUTurkey](#) [#migrationEU](#)

Further information

[Press release: EU-Turkey deal on migrants not perfect but most realistic tool to tackle crisis \(13.04.2016\)](#)

[EU-Turkey agreement: Questions and Answers \(EC Memo,,19.03.2016\)](#)

[EU-Turkey statement \(Council, 18.03.2016\)](#)

[European Council conclusions 17-18 March 2016](#)

[Turkey: MEPs debate migration agreement with EU - Plenary debate on 28 April](#)

[Audiovisual material for media](#)

[Procedure file](#)

Removing technical obstacles to creating a single EU railway area

Draft rules designed to overcome obstacles to creating a single EU railway area will be debated and voted on Thursday. These rules, in part one of the “4th railway package” agreed with EU ministers in June 2015, tackle obstacles that are due to differences among national railway standards and procedures. They cover interoperability, safety and the role of the European Railway Agency (ERA).

The text would enhance the powers of the European Union Agency for Railways to issue EU market authorizations for rolling stock (locomotives, carriages etc) and safety certification of rail companies, so as to cut the duration and costs of procedures and thus help boost safety and the development of the EU rail sector.

Background

The 4th railway package was tabled by the European Commission in January 2013 to further improve the competitiveness and quality of rail services by removing administrative costs, introducing more competition in passenger transport services and ensuring a level playing field for operators.

A deal on the “technical” files was agreed in June 2015 by negotiators for Parliament, the Council and the Commission and approved in Parliament’s Transport Committee [in March 2016](#). Parliament and Council negotiators also reached a [provisional agreement](#) on the “market” pillar of the railway package on 19 April 2016, which Parliament is likely to put to a plenary vote after the 2016 summer break.

Procedure:

Co-decision (second reading agreement)

[2013/0015\(COD\)](#) - Interoperability of the rail system within the EU

[2016/0016\(COD\) - Railway safety](#)

[2013/0014\(COD\) - European Union Agency for railways](#)

Debate: Thursday, 28 April

Vote: Thursday, 28 April

Press conference Thursday, 28 April 14.00

#4thRail

Further information

[Draft resolution to approve agreement with Council: Interoperability of the EU rail system](#)

[Draft resolution to approve agreement with Council: Railway safety](#)

[Draft resolution to approve agreement with Council: EU Agency for Railways](#)

[Press release on committee vote \(15.03.2016\)](#)

[Rapporteur: Izaskun BILBAO BARANDICA \(ALDE, ES\)](#)

[Rapporteur: Michael CRAMER \(GREENS/EFA, DE\)](#)

[Rapporteur: Roberts ZĪLE \(ECR, LT\)](#)

[Procedure file: Interoperability of the rail system within the EU](#)

[Procedure file: Railway safety](#)

[Procedure file: European Union Agency for Railways](#)

[EP Research in depth analysis \(March 2016\)](#)

[EPRS background paper: 4th railway package "technical pillar"](#)

Financial markets: MEPs aim to make LIBOR and other benchmarks more trustworthy

"Critical" benchmarks such as the London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) and the Euro Interbank Offered Rate (EURIBOR), influencing financial instruments and contracts with an average value of at least €500 billion, should become more reliable when Parliament votes in new legislation on Thursday. The law aims to clean up the benchmark-setting process, improve transparency, and prevent conflicts of interest like those that led to the LIBOR rigging scandals of recent years.

Manipulating benchmarks such as LIBOR or EURIBOR undermines market confidence, distorts the economy, reduces investors' profits and inflates mortgages and loans. Other benchmarks similarly influence currency markets.

An informal deal on benchmarks to be confirmed by the plenary vote on Thursday was struck by negotiators from Parliament's Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee and the Council in November last year. The negotiators decided to create three categories of benchmarks, subject to different supervisory regimes depending on how much influence they have over the stability of financial markets.

Procedure: Co-decision (ordinary legislative procedure, first reading agreement)

[2013/0314\(COD\)](#)

Vote: Thursday, 28 April

#LIBOR, #Euribor, #indexes, #benchmarks

Further information

[Procedure file](#)

[Story: Benchmarks: restoring confidence in the financial markets](#)

[EP Research Background note: Benchmarks in financial instruments](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Cora van Nieuwenhuizen \(ALDE, NL\)](#)

Protecting children's best interests in cross-border custody disputes

Measures to better protect the best interests of children in cross-border parental custody disputes, adoption decisions and abductions by parents within the EU will be debated by MEPs, Commissioner Věra Jourová and Jeanine Hennis-Plasschaert for the Council Presidency on Wednesday and wrapped up in a non-binding resolution to be voted on Thursday.

MEPs are set to urge EU countries to designate specialised chambers within family courts or cross-border mediation bodies to handle transnational cases involving children in the EU, and also to stress the need for the EU Commission and member states to lay down rules on the automatic recognition of domestic adoption documents issued in other EU countries.

Note to editors

The resolution follows hundreds of petitions on child-related cases received by the European Parliament's Petitions Committee. Many concerns point to a problem with the implementation of the Brussels IIa Regulation on recognition and enforcement of family law. Under Parliament's Rule of Procedure 216(2), the committee may, with regard to an admissible petition, draw up an own-initiative report or submit a short motion for resolution to Parliament, provided that there is no objection by the Conference of Presidents (Parliament's President and political group leaders).

Many of the child-related petitions supporting the new resolution concern various cases in Germany, the UK and Denmark.

Procedure: Oral questions to Council and Commission (with resolution)

[2016/2575\(RSP\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 27 April

Vote: Thursday, 28 April

#childcustody #ep_petitions, #ep_legal

Further information

[Draft resolution on safeguarding the best interest of the child across the EU on the basis of petitions addressed to the European Parliament](#)

[Press release on committee vote \(15.03.2016\)](#)

[Petitions Committee](#)

[Legal Affairs Committee](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[EP Study: Cross-border parental child abduction in the European Union](#)

MEPs to call for parliamentary oversight of the European Investment Bank

MEPs are set to back plans for an inter-institutional agreement between the European Parliament and the European Investment Bank (EIB), to step up cooperation and allow greater parliamentary oversight of EIB work, in a debate with EIB president Werner Hoyer on Wednesday at 15.00 and a vote on Thursday. It would entitle MEPs to put questions directly to the EIB President with an agreed time limit for replies, as it already happens with the President of the European Central Bank.

MEPs note in their annual report on EIB activities in 2014 that it plays an important role in implementing the "Juncker Plan" (Investment Plan for Europe) to boost growth, jobs and social and territorial cohesion in the EU. They therefore recommend introducing external regulatory supervision of the EIB, ask it to detail the results achieved by the various EIB financial instruments in its own Activity Report and back the plans for inter-institutional agreement, which they expect to result in greater scrutiny and more dialogue.

Background

The [European Investment Bank](#), whose shareholders are EU member states, is the world's biggest multilateral public lender. EIB grants loans and gives guarantees which facilitate the financing of projects in all sectors of economy, while operating on a non-profit basis. In 2014 the EIB funded 285,000 small and medium-sized enterprises, thus safeguarding 3.6 million jobs, and signed contracts for a total of 413 projects within the EU worth €69 billion and 92 new projects outside the EU worth €7.98 billion.

Procedure: Non-legislative resolution

[2015/2127\(INI\)](#)

Debate: Wednesday, 27 April

Vote: Thursday, 28 April

#EIB

Further information

[Draft resolution on the European Investment Bank \(EIB\) – Annual Report 2014](#)

[Rapporteur: Georgi Pirinski \(S&D, BG\)](#)

[Press release: Parliament approves Juncker Plan Rules](#)

Parliament to give its verdict on EU budget management in 2014

Parliament will give its verdict on the management of EU funds, by EU institutions, decentralized agencies and joint undertakings in 2014, in a vote on Thursday. The Budgetary Control Committee recommended on 4 April that Parliament should postpone approving spending by three joint private sector-EU partnerships in technology field, the Council of Ministers and the European Council, because they have yet to provide additional documents and information.

In the [annual budget “discharge” procedure](#), Parliament, as the EU's sole discharge authority, verifies whether EU funds were spent according to the rules. It may grant, postpone or refuse to grant a discharge, which is the seal of approval required for the formal closure of institutional accounts.

The EU Commission is legally responsible for the biggest chunk of the funds, amounting to €142.5 billion in 2014, but 80% of all EU funding is in fact managed locally, by EU member states.

Procedure: Discharge

Vote: Thursday, 28 April

#EUBudget

Further information

[The budgetary control committee's 2014 discharge page](#)

[EP Think Tank: Discharge procedure for the EU budget](#)

[EP research: Discharge to the Council and the European Council](#)

[Rapporteur on agencies: Derek Vaughan \(S&D, UK\)](#)

[Rapporteur on joint undertakings: Marian-Jean Marinescu \(EPP, RO\)](#)

[Rapporteur on institutions and on EU general budget - External Action Service : Ryszard Czarnecki \(ECR, PL\)](#)

[Rapporteur on institutions: Anders Primdahl Vistisen \(ECR, DK\)](#)

[Rapporteur on institutions: Monica Macovei \(ECR, RO\)](#)

[Rapporteur on EU general budget - European Commission and ECA special reports: Martina Dlabajová \(ALDE, CZ\)](#)

[Rapporteur on EU general budget - 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th EDFs: Claudia Schmidt \(EPP, AT\)](#)

[EP Think tank: Understanding the EU Budget discharge procedure](#)

Domestic workers and carers: MEPs to call for proper EU legal status

Domestic workers and carers, most of whom are migrant women, should be given an official status in EU labour law, so as to discourage human trafficking, forced labour and exploitation, say MEPs in a draft resolution to be voted on Thursday. This recognition should be set out in common EU laws and rules, and should help to establish easy-to-manage models for legal employer-worker relationships, so as to end precariousness and undeclared domestic work, they add.

Domestic workers and carers should be included in all national labour and anti-discrimination laws and be enabled to join trade unions, says the resolution, drafted by Kostadinka Kuneva (GUE/NLG,EL).

The text calls for adequate inspection methods to stop human trafficking, forced labour and financial exploitation of domestic workers, and asks, EU member states to set up bilateral agreements and visa arrangements with states sending domestic workers and carers to the EU, says the text.

Note to editors

According to the ILO, 2.5 million people are employed as domestic workers in the EU, 88% of whom are women (2010 figures). Over 20 million Europeans, two thirds of whom are women, care for dependent adults.

MEPs cite the "service vouchers" scheme in Belgium and the "universal service employment cheque (CESU)" in France, as examples of successful models with positive impacts on the social and labour conditions of workers in this sector.

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

2015/2094(INI)

Debate: Wednesday, 27 April

Vote: Thursday, 28 April

Press conference: Thursday, 28 April at 14.30

#womenrights #domesticworkers

Further information

[Draft resolution on women domestic workers and carers in the EU](#)

[Profile of rapporteur Kostadinka Kuneva\(GUE/NGL, EL\)](#)

[Procedure file](#)

[Kostadinka Kuneva: Regulating domestic workers will reduce trafficking and abuse](#)

[EP research: The situation of domestic workers](#)

[ILO Study: Domestic workers and across the world: global and regional statistics and the extend of legal protection:](#)

[FRA Study: Migrants in an irregular situation employed in domestic work:](#)

[Audiovisuel material for professionals: Video: extracts from the vote on women domestic workers and carers in the EU:](#)

Other topics on the agenda

Other topics for debate and votes include the following:

- Gender equality and empowering women in the digital age (*INI*) - *vote Thursday on a non-legislative resolution by Terry Reintke (Greens/EFA, DE)*
- Attacks on hospitals and schools as violations of international humanitarian law - Oral question to Council by Elena Valenciano (S&D, ES) and Linda McAvan (S&D, UK) - *vote Thursday on a motion for a resolution*
- Public access to documents for the years 2014-2015 (*INI*) - *vote Thursday on a non-legislative resolution by Laura Ferrara (EFDD, IT)*

Further information

[Procedure file on gender equality and empowering women in the digital age](#)

[Procedure file - Attacks on hospitals and schools as violations of international humanitarian law](#)

[Oral question to Council - Attacks on hospitals and schools as violations of international humanitarian law](#)

[Procedure file on public access to documents for the years 2014/2015](#)