Newsletter
13-16 September 2021
Strasbourg plenary session

State of the European Union: Ursula von der Leyen to address MEPs
At 9.00 on 15 September, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will deliver her State of the European Union address to the European Parliament, followed by a debate with MEPs.

Parliament to discuss humanitarian and security situation in Afghanistan
On Tuesday, MEPs will debate how to respond to the Afghanistan crisis with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell. A resolution will be put to the vote on Thursday.

Health Union: enhancing disease prevention and cross-border cooperation
MEPs will debate and vote on two laws to strengthen the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and better tackle cross-border health threats.

LGBTIQ rights and anti-discrimination measures in the EU
In a resolution to be voted on by MEPs on Monday (results Tuesday), Parliament will assess the problems and discrimination experienced by LGBTIQ citizens and families in Europe.

Poland: MEPs to assess continued attacks on media freedom and the rule of law
MEPs, with Council and Commission representatives, will consider a draft bill which may threaten media pluralism, and the latest Polish challenge to EU rules and values.

EU Blue Card: final vote on new scheme to attract highly-skilled migrants
MEPs are set to give their final approval to the reform of the EU’s Blue Card directive, to facilitate the employment of highly qualified third country nationals in Europe.

EU-Russia: a strategy to counter the Kremlin’s politics and promote democracy
Parliament is set to encourage the EU to push back against Russia’s aggressive policies while laying the groundwork for cooperation with a future democratic country.

**Ending the use of animals in research and testing**
In a resolution to be put to a vote on Wednesday (results Thursday), Parliament will present ways to accelerate the transition to a research system that does not use animals.

**MEPs to evaluate EU’s response to recent natural disasters**
On Tuesday, Parliament will debate with the Commission the measures taken to support countries and regions affected by natural disasters this summer.

**EU 2030 climate package: Parliament to assess Commission’s proposals**
Following the publication of the latest IPCC report on climate change, Parliament will debate the “Fit for 55” package with Council and Commission on Tuesday.

**MEPs to call for gender-based violence to be classified as a crime under EU law**
To better protect victims, Parliament is set to call for online and offline gender-based violence to be included as a new area of crime under article 83(1) TFEU.

**MEPs set to approve seven year budget for accession countries**
On Tuesday, MEPs are expected to back the 14.2 bn EUR fund supporting seven partner countries on their path to EU membership.

**Parliament to set out its vision for a new EU-China strategy**
MEPs expected to say EU-China dialogue should continue on issues like climate change and health crises, while also raising concerns on systemic human rights violations.

**Pegasus Project revelations: MEPs debate government spying**
On Wednesday, MEPs will ask the Commission and member states for EU action on recent allegations of governmental cyber-surveillance of journalists, politicians and others.

**€5 billion fund to help EU countries and regions deal with Brexit**
MEPs are set to adopt a €5 billion Brexit Adjustment Reserve to help member states deal with the economic, social and territorial impact of the UK’s departure from the EU.

**Taxation: MEPs to evaluate effectiveness of tax information sharing**
Sharing of information is crucial in fighting tax avoidance and evasion. On Wednesday, MEPs will assess progress, lessons learned and remaining obstacles.
Platform workers: Parliament to call for equal social rights
MEPs will debate and vote on a draft resolution proposing workers for digital labour platforms enjoy the same rights and social protection as traditional employees.

Lebanon: MEPs to discuss need for reforms and support for vulnerable groups
On Tuesday, MEPs will assess with High Representative Borrell the political and economic situation in Lebanon, experiencing its worst peacetime economic and financial crisis.

Parliament’s proposal for an EU Independent Ethics Body
MEPs are set to adopt their position on the creation of a new EU body to improve the transparency and integrity of EU institutions.

Asparagus, flower bulbs, ornamentals: new varieties protected for longer
Plans to extend plant variety protection for asparagus, flower bulbs, woody small fruits and woody ornamentals from 25 to 30 years will be put to vote on Monday (results Tuesday).

Human rights and democracy resolutions
Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights, democracy and rule of law topics on Thursday morning, followed by votes later the same day.

Other topics on the agenda


Newsletter - 13-16 September 2021 - Strasbourg plenary session

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Follow pre-session briefing - 11.00-12.00, Friday, 10 September
Draft agenda
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Press conferences and other events
EP Multimedia Centre
EP Newshub
European Parliament Press Tool Kit
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State of the European Union: Ursula von der Leyen to address MEPs

At 9.00 on 15 September, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will deliver her State of the European Union address to the European Parliament, followed by a debate with MEPs.

Ursula von der Leyen is expected to outline the impact of the Commission's work in the past year, particularly in tackling the COVID-19 health and economic crisis. She will also share with MEPs her vision for responding to the challenges the EU faces, including the economic recovery, the fight against climate change, the digitalisation agenda and the Conference on the Future of Europe.

MEPs, in their responses, will assess the Commission’s work and the initiatives envisaged for the coming year. They will also present their own views and ideas; the annual State of the Union debate is a chance for MEPs to scrutinise the work and plans of the European Commission and help set the EU’s direction.

Background

The State of the European Union debate is a key moment to demonstrate the European Commission's accountability towards the EU's democratically elected representatives. This annual event is significant to promote a more transparent and democratic Union. It is an opportunity to bring the European Union closer to the citizens, highlighting the year’s core action points and challenges. Citizens’ rights and the democratic process are at the heart of this unique plenary debate.

How to follow the address and debate

Statement by the President of the Commission

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Further information

State of the European Union debate 2020

EP Research study
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Parliament to discuss humanitarian and security situation in Afghanistan

On Tuesday, MEPs will debate how to respond to the Afghanistan crisis with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell. A resolution will be put to the vote on Thursday.

MEPs and Mr Borrell are set to discuss how to react to the humanitarian and migration crisis, help people in need and protect those in danger in Afghanistan, particularly women and children. They are also likely to examine what support the EU could offer to Afghan refugees as well as to people who are still trying to leave the country, and how to engage with the Taliban authorities in Kabul.

Alongside humanitarian concerns, the latest developments in Afghanistan have also prompted discussions on what immediate lessons the EU should draw from NATO's withdrawal. The security situation in Europe, the Common European Defence Policy, the EU’s strategic autonomy and the need to strengthen Europe’s military capacities are also likely to come up in the debate.

Background

On 15 August, the Taliban reinstated their power in Afghanistan, triggering a crisis in the country with thousands of people trying to escape by air and land. Reacting to the crisis, European Parliament President David Sassoli called for a strong and common European voice on the international stage.

You can watch the plenary debate via EP Live, and EbS+.

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

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

Vote Results: Thursday, 16 September

Further information
Full speech by the President of the European Parliament, David Sassoli, at the Bled Strategic Forum

EP Think Tank: Afghanistan once more under Taliban rule, 02.09.2021

EP Multimedia Centre: EU - Afghanistan
Health Union: enhancing disease prevention and cross-border cooperation

MEPs will debate and vote on two laws to strengthen the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and better tackle cross-border health threats.

In adopting their position on the two legislative proposals before the summer break, MEPs from the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), proposed a number of ways to enhance the EU’s disease prevention and control capacity. This would be ensured through an extension of the mandate of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) to also cover major non-communicable diseases - for example cardiovascular diseases, cancer or diabetes - as well as through reinforced coordination between EU bodies and their national and international counterparts, and better involvement of member states.

They also outline how the EU should strengthen crisis prevention, preparedness and response when addressing future serious cross-border health threats, including through clear procedures and increased transparency around EU joint procurement and purchase agreements.

Background

As part of building a European Health Union, on 11 November 2020 the Commission proposed a new health security framework, based on the experience dealing with the coronavirus. The package includes a proposal for a regulation on serious cross-border threats to health and a proposal to reinforce the mandate of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control.

Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure

2020/0320(COD) - ECDC

2020/0322(COD) - cross-border threats

Debate: Monday, 13 September

Vote results: Wednesday, 15 September
Further information
Draft report (ECDC)
Draft report (cross-border threats)
Procedure file (ECDC)
Procedure file (cross-border threats)
EP Research: Building up resilience to cross-border health threats: Moving towards a European health union (20.04.2021)
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
LGBTIQ rights and anti-discrimination measures in the EU

In a resolution to be voted on by MEPs on Monday (results Tuesday), Parliament will assess the problems and discrimination experienced by LGBTIQ citizens and families in Europe.

The text prepared by the Petitions Committee calls for the pan-European recognition of same-sex spouses and registered partners, who should enjoy the same rights across EU member states. MEPs also say that parents of rainbow families should be consistently recognised as the parents of their children.

Parliament is expected to urge the Commission to launch infringement procedures against Romania, where the government has failed to implement update national legislation to reflect a European Court of Justice ruling that confirms that extends “spouse” provisions should apply in EU law to same-sex couples. The draft resolution also points to the discrimination that LGBTIQ communities face in Poland and Hungary, and calls for further EU action (infringement procedures, judicial redress and budgetary tools) to address the situation.

Procedure: motion for resolution

2021/2679(RSP)

Vote: Monday, 13 September, results Tuesday 14 September

Further information

Draft resolution

Press release on committee vote (15.07.2021)

Procedure file

EP study: Obstacles to the Free Movement of Rainbow Families in the EU

Press release: EP vehemently opposed to Hungarian anti-LGBTIQ law (08.07.2021)
EP resolution on breaches of the rule of law in Poland (17.09.2020)

EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Poland: MEPs to assess continued attacks on media freedom and the rule of law

MEPs, with Council and Commission representatives, will consider a draft bill which may threaten media pluralism, and the latest Polish challenge to EU rules and values.

The Polish government has proposed new broadcasting legislation that would bar entities from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) from owning more than 49% of Polish media companies. The move is seen as an attempt to silence TVN, a US-owned network critical of the Polish authorities. On 12 August, Commission Vice-President for Values and Transparency Věra Jourová said “the draft Polish broadcasting law sends a negative signal” for media pluralism and called for an EU Media Freedom Act “to uphold media freedom and support the rule of law”.

MEPs will also assess recent developments on the situation of the rule of law in Poland. In August, following a European Court of Justice ruling declaring the country’s disciplinary regime for judges incompatible with EU law due to its lack of independence from political influence, the Polish government gave up on its widely criticised judicial reform plans. However, it has not fully complied with the ruling to dismantle the Disciplinary Chamber of its Constitutional Tribunal, which has led the Commission to seek the imposition of financial penalties. In parallel, the Polish Prime Minister’s office had already submitted legal challenges to the country’s Constitutional Tribunal targeting the principles of the primacy of EU law and sincere cooperation between the EU and its member states. The Tribunal is expected to announce its decision in late September.

The debate will take place on Wednesday, a resolution will be put to the vote on Thursday.

Council and Commission statements, with resolution

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Vote: Thursday, 16 September
Further information

High time for Council and Commission to protect Europeans and the EU, MEPs say (7.7.2021)
Lessons learnt from the Commission’s 2020 rule of law report (24.06.2021)

EP resolution on the determination of a clear risk of a serious breach by Poland of the rule of law (17.09.2020)
Media freedom: EP warns of attempts to silence critics and undermine pluralism (25.11.2020)
Rule of law concerns in member states: how the EU can act (infographic)

European Commission - 2021 Rule of law report
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
EU Blue Card: final vote on new scheme to attract highly-skilled migrants

MEPs are set to give their final approval to the reform of the EU’s Blue Card directive, to facilitate the employment of highly qualified third country nationals in Europe.

In May 2021, Parliament and Council negotiators agreed on a revision of the 2009 Blue Card directive to make it easier for employers in EU member states to hire third country nationals. Originally proposed by the Commission in 2016, this will be the only legislative change at EU level in the field of legal labour migration in recent years.

The revised directive on entry and residence conditions foresees more flexible criteria, including a lower threshold for the minimum salary that applicants must earn in order to qualify for a Blue Card. It also expands the rights of beneficiaries with simplified intra-EU mobility and faster family reunification procedures.

Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure, 1st reading agreement

2016/0176(COD)

Debate: Tuesday 14 September

Vote results: Wednesday, 15 September

Further information
Press release after committee vote (3.06.2021)
EP rapporteur Javier MORENO SÁNCHEZ (S&D, ES)
EP Research Service brief on the revision of the EU Blue Card Directive
Procedure file
EU-Russia: a strategy to counter the Kremlin’s politics and promote democracy

Parliament is set to encourage the EU to push back against Russia’s aggressive policies while laying the groundwork for cooperation with a future democratic country.

In a new assessment of the direction that EU-Russia political relations are taking, MEPs make clear that there is a distinction between the Russian people and President Vladimir Putin’s regime. The latter is, they say, a "stagnating authoritarian kleptocracy led by a president-for-life who is surrounded by a circle of oligarchs".

Members stress, however, that Russia can have a democratic future. With that in mind, they ask the Council to adopt an EU strategy for a future democratic Russia, incorporating incentives and conditions to strengthen domestic democratic tendencies.

Procedure: own-initiative report

2021/2042(INI)

Debate: Tuesday 14 September

Vote: Wednesday 15 September, results Thursday 16 September

Further information

Draft recommendation
Profile of rapporteur Andrius Kubilius (EPP, Lithuania)
Procedure file
Direction of EU-Russia political relations in AFET committee: statement by Andrius KUBILIUS (EPP, LT), rapporteur
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Ending the use of animals in research and testing

In a resolution to be put to a vote on Wednesday (results Thursday), Parliament will present ways to accelerate the transition to a research system that does not use animals.

Current EU legislation protects the welfare of animals still needed for research. As its ultimate goal, the legislation aims to stop animals being used for scientific purposes, by continuously replacing, reducing and refining their use in research, regulatory testing and education.

MEPs are expected to call for increased efforts at both EU and member state level including targeted funding, better coordination and concrete goals on how to replace animals in specific scientific areas.

The resolution will wrap up a debate held during the July Plenary.

Background

Since 1986, the EU has had specific legislation on the use of animals for scientific purposes. The rules currently in place limit animal testing for research and set minimum requirements for accommodating and caring for animals. Animal testing for finished cosmetic products has been prohibited in the EU since 2004 and for cosmetic ingredients since 2009.

Procedure: Resolutions on topical subjects

2021/2784(RSP)

Debate: Thursday, 8 July

Final vote: Wednesday, 15 September, results Thursday 16 September
Further information

Procedure file

Video of the Plenary debate (08.07.2021)

European Commission: “Animals used for scientific purposes”

EP Research: Animal testing

Animal welfare and protection: EU laws explained (videos)

EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
MEPs to evaluate EU’s response to recent natural disasters

On Tuesday, Parliament will debate with the Commission the measures taken to support countries and regions affected by natural disasters this summer.

Severe floods, landslides and forest fires hit several European countries this summer, causing loss of life and having a devastating impact on people’s homes and livelihoods, as well as economic sectors like farming. MEPs are expected to quiz the Commission on the EU’s immediate support to national and regional authorities, the activation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, as well as plans to provide necessary funding for disaster relief through the EU Solidarity Fund.

Parliament is likely to reiterate its concern that extreme weather events and natural disasters will only multiply and intensify as a result of climate change and is expected to call on the Commission to develop long-term disaster management strategies and simplify existing funding procedures.

Procedure: question for oral answer, followed by debate

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

Further information
Question for oral answer - Natural disasters in summer 2021
European Parliament resolution of 18 May 2021 on the review of the European Union Solidarity Fund
Infoclip: Floods in Belgium
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
EU 2030 climate package: Parliament to assess Commission’s proposals

Following the publication of the latest IPCC report on climate change, Parliament will debate the “Fit for 55” package with Council and Commission on Tuesday.

MEPs will seek answers about ensuring the new laws proposed in the “Fit for 55 in 2030” package will meet the increased climate ambitions adopted in the European Climate Law. This debate comes little more than a month after the publication of the latest IPCC report confirming climate change is widespread, rapid, and intensifying.

The package comprises legislative proposals for the revision of the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS), a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), amendments to the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Directives, as well as a revision of the CO2 standards for cars, Land Use, Land Use Change and forest (LULUCF) and Effort Sharing Regulations.

Background

The European Climate Law adopted in June 2021 transforms the European Green Deal's political commitment to EU climate neutrality by 2050 into a binding obligation for the EU and member states. It also increases the EU’s target for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 from 40% to at least 55%, compared to 1990 level.

Council and Commission statements

Debate: Tuesday 14 September
Further information


Video interview with Pascal Canfin on the Fit for 55 for 2030 package (14.07.2021)


European Parliament: Fit for 55 package under the European Green Deal

IPCC report: “Climate change widespread, rapid, and intensifying” (09.08.2021)

EP Research briefing: EU Climate Law (03.06.2021)

EP Research briefing: Climate change and climate action

EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
MEPs to call for gender-based violence to be classified as a crime under EU law

To better protect victims, Parliament is set to call for online and offline gender-based violence to be included as a new area of crime under article 83(1) TFEU.

In a draft legislative initiative to be debated on Wednesday and put to a vote on Thursday, MEPs demand targeted legislation and policies to address the situation faced by victims of violence and discrimination based on their gender, whether offline or online.

The Commission should use the new area of crime to be established under Article 83(1) TFEU (Treaty on the Functioning of the EU), as a legal basis for an EU Directive preventing and combatting all forms of gender-based violence. This new Directive should implement the Istanbul Convention and other international standards, and should contain prevention measures (including via gender-sensitive education programmes), support services and protection measures for victims, minimum standards for law enforcement and better cooperation among member states.

Background

One third of women in the EU have experienced physical and/or sexual violence. Around 50 women lose their lives to domestic violence every week, and 75% of women within a professional setting have experienced sexual harassment.

Procedure: Legislative initiative procedure

2021/2035(INL)

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Vote: Thursday 16 September
Further information
Draft report
Procedure file
Profile of co-rapporteur Malin Björk (The Left, SE)
Profile of co-rapporteur Diana Riba i Giner (Greens/EFA, ES)

European Institute for Gender Equality - Gender-based violence
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
- Violence against women
MEPs set to approve seven year budget for accession countries

On Tuesday, MEPs are expected to back the 14.2 bn EUR fund supporting seven partner countries on their path to EU membership.

Following an agreement reached with Council in June 2021, MEPs are expected to give their green light to the 2021-2027 Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III), the funding instrument to help prepare accession countries for the obligations of EU membership. Worth 14.2 billion euro, it will support the implementation of EU-related reforms in seven partner countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey.

Procedure: COD - Ordinary legislative procedure, Regulation

Vote (if no amendments, announced as adopted after the debate): Tuesday, 14 September

Further information
EP draft recommendation for IPA III second reading
Procedure file
Rapporteur: Tonino Picula (S&D, HR)
Rapporteur: Željana Zovko (EPP, HR)
Legislative train IPA III
Committee on Foreign Affairs
Parliament to set out its vision for a new EU-China strategy

MEPs expected to say EU-China dialogue should continue on issues like climate change and health crises, while also raising concerns on systemic human rights violations.

In its new report, the Foreign Affairs Committee outlines six pillars on which the EU should build a new strategy to deal with China: cooperation on global challenges, engagement on international norms and human rights, identifying risks and vulnerabilities, building partnerships with like-minded partners, fostering strategic autonomy and defending European interests and values.

The report also addresses a range of other issues at the core of EU-China relations, such as trade, technology, disinformation, security challenges and the reform of multilateral organisations. It will be debated on Tuesday and voted Wednesday (results Thursday).

Procedure: own-initiative report

2021/2037(INI)

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

Vote: Wednesday, 15 September, results Thursday 16 September

Further information

Procedure file
Press release: “MEPs refuse any agreement with China whilst sanctions are in place” (20.05.2021)
Press release: “MEPs call on EU to consider lawsuit against China over Hong Kong” (19.06.2020)
A new EU-China strategy: statement by Hilde VAUTMANS (Renew, BE), rapporteur - AFET Committee
European Parliament's Delegation for Relations with the People's Republic of China
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Pegasus Project revelations: MEPs debate government spying

On Wednesday, MEPs will ask the Commission and member states for EU action on recent allegations of governmental cyber-surveillance of journalists, politicians and others.

An international investigative journalism consortium has revealed that various governments, including Hungary, may have misused a commercially available quasi-military spyware product called Pegasus to carry out surveillance on opposition figures, human rights activists, journalists and lawyers in the EU and elsewhere.

On 9 September, two of the leaders of the investigative project spoke at a hearing of the Special Committee on Foreign Interference.

Procedure: Council and Commission statement without resolution

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Further information
Hearing with the founder and the editor-in-chief of Forbidden Stories (starting at 10:55, 09.09.2021)
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
€5 billion fund to help EU countries and regions deal with Brexit

MEPs are set to adopt a €5 billion Brexit Adjustment Reserve to help member states deal with the economic, social and territorial impact of the UK’s departure from the EU.

In June 2021, Parliament and Council negotiators agreed to set up the fund and pre-finance €1.6 billion of support in 2021. The remaining €3.4 billion should follow with separate tranches of €1.2 billion in 2022 and 23, followed by €1 billion in 2025 (in 2018 prices).

Measures that qualify for funding must be specifically set up to counter the adverse economic, social, territorial and environmental consequences of the UK’s withdrawal from the EU. They may include, among others, support to businesses, local communities, job creation or the re-integration of EU citizens.

Procedure: ordinary legislative procedure, 1st reading agreement

2020/0380(COD)

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

Vote results: Wednesday, 15 September

Further information
Press release on the political agreement (17.06.2021)
Draft rules on Brexit Adjustment Reserve
EP rapporteur Pascal Arimont (EPP, BE)
EP Research Service brief on Brexit Adjustment Reserve
Procedure file
Taxation: MEPs to evaluate effectiveness of tax information sharing

Sharing of information is crucial in fighting tax avoidance and evasion. On Wednesday, MEPs will assess progress, lessons learned and remaining obstacles.

The draft report, to be discussed on Wednesday and put to the vote on Thursday, criticises the Commission and all member states except Finland and Sweden for refusing to make available sufficient information to allow a thorough verification of the effectiveness of cooperation between national tax authorities.

MEPs recommend more types of income and assets should be included within the EU Directive regulating what information national authorities should exchange. The text also calls for a new common system to measure the impact of administrative cooperation, in order to inform what qualitative improvements to the process are most urgently needed.

*Procedure: Own initiative - implementation report*

2020/2046(INI)

*Debate: Wednesday 15 September*

*Vote: Thursday 16 September*

Further information
Draft resolution on the implementation of the EU requirements for exchange of tax information
Profile of rapporteur: Sven Giegold (Greens, DE)

Procedure file

EP Research - Implementation of the EU requirements for tax information exchange
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Platform workers: Parliament to call for equal social rights

MEPs will debate and vote on a draft resolution proposing workers for digital labour platforms enjoy the same rights and social protection as traditional employees.

The report raises concerns about the poor working conditions and bogus self-employment of people working for digital platforms, for example for food delivery and transport services, caused by a lack of legal certainty in the sector. MEPs are set to demand a new legislative proposal to ensure that these platform workers are granted fair and transparent working conditions, a healthy and safe working environment and have access to collective bargaining.

They are also likely to call for transparent, non-discriminatory and ethical algorithms in platform work.

Procedure: Own-initiative report

2019/2186(INI)

Debate: Monday 13 September

Vote: Wednesday 15 September, result Thursday 16 September

Further information
Draft resolution on fair working conditions, rights and social protection for platform workers:
Press release on committee vote (14.07.2021):
Profile of rapporteur Sylvie Brunet (Renew, FR):
Procedure file:
European Parliament study - the platform economy and precarious work:
First stage social partners consultation on platform work:
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Lebanon: MEPs to discuss need for reforms and support for vulnerable groups

On Tuesday, MEPs will assess with High Representative Borrell the political and economic situation in Lebanon, experiencing its worst peacetime economic and financial crisis.

Government formation process, much-needed reforms, a dire socio-economic situation, the 2022 elections and the situation of Syrian and Palestinian refugees in the country are likely to be raised by MEPs in Tuesday's plenary debate. A resolution will be voted on Thursday.

The international community (UN, EU, International Monetary Fund, World Bank...) has repeatedly called for the Lebanese political establishment to reach an agreement and form a legitimate and democratic government, but without success. The country now has its third caretaker government since the August 2020 explosion in the port of Beirut that killed approximately 200 people and destroyed large parts of the capital. According to the World Bank, the country is at risk of financial collapse.

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

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

Vote Results: Thursday, 16 September

Further information
Committee on Foreign Affairs

EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Parliament’s proposal for an EU Independent Ethics Body

MEPs are set to adopt their position on the creation of a new EU body to improve the transparency and integrity of EU institutions.

Parliament’s draft report lays out proposals for an interinstitutional agreement (IIA) between the Parliament and the Commission that would establish an EU Independent Ethics Body. According to the text, it should be open to all EU institutions, agencies and bodies and have an array of responsibilities, including being able to:

- start investigations on possible conflicts of interest or “revolving door” cases involving Commissioners, MEPs and EU staff of the participating institutions, based on information received from third parties, such as journalists, NGOs, whistle-blowers or the European Ombudsman - allowing anonymity if appropriate;
- propose and advise on ethics rules, before, during and in some cases after a term of office or employment;
- access administrative documents, to help the EP Committee on Legal Affairs in their assessment of possible conflicts of interest of Commissioners-designate prior to hearings; and
- work in collaboration with national authorities and other competent EU bodies and agencies, such as OLAF and the EPPO.

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen promised to set up an Independent Ethics Body before her election and entrusted the task to Vice-President Věra Jourová.

Procedure: own-initiative report

2020/2133(INI)

Vote: Thursday, 16 September
Further information
Draft report on strengthening transparency and integrity in the EU institutions by setting up an independent EU ethics body.

Press release following the vote in the Constitutional Affairs committee (14.07.2021)

Procedure file
Profile of rapporteur: Daniel Freund (Greens/EFA, DE)
EP Study: The Effectiveness of Conflict of Interest Policies in the EU- Member States (17.12.2020)
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Asparagus, flower bulbs, ornamentals: new varieties protected for longer

Plans to extend plant variety protection for asparagus, flower bulbs, woody small fruits and woody ornamentals from 25 to 30 years will be put to vote on Monday (results Tuesday).

Parliament’s and Council’s negotiators agreed to legally protect these plant varieties for longer in order to reflect their complex, costly and lengthy breeding process, as well as the time breeders and growers need to build up a sufficiently large stock to generate a reasonable income.

In general, plant variety rights in the EU are legally protected for 25 years. Varieties of trees, vines and potatoes are protected for a longer period of 30 years.

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure (co-decision), 1st reading agreement

2021/0019(COD)

Vote: Monday, 13 September

Vote results: Tuesday, 14 September

Further information
Draft report

Profile of rapporteur: Bert-Jan Ruissen (ECR, NL)
Procedure file
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Human rights and democracy resolutions

Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights, democracy and rule of law topics on Thursday morning, followed by votes later the same day.

- Government crackdown on protests and citizens in Cuba
- The case of human rights defender Ahmed Mansoor in UAE
- The situation in Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya

Procedure: non-legislative resolutions

Debate/vote: Thursday 16 September

Vote: Thursday 16 September

Further information
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Other topics on the agenda

Other topics for debate and vote include the following:

- Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States (Ďuriš Nicholsonová), vote Monday.
- Association of the Overseas Countries and Territories with the European Union (Tobé), vote Monday.
- Presentation by the Council of its position on the draft general budget - 2022 financial year, debate Wednesday.
- EU contribution to transforming global food systems to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, OQ Commission, Wednesday.
- Reversing the negative social consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, OQ, Wednesday.
- Request for defence of the privileges and immunities of Guy Verhofstadt, Dzhambazki, vote Monday.
- Towards Future-proof Inland Waterway Transport (IWT) in Europe, Nagtegaal, vote Monday.
- United States sanctions and the rule of law, OQ Commission, Thursday.