Jina Mahsa Amini and Iranian women protest movement to receive Sakharov Prize

On Tuesday at 11.30, President Roberta Metsola will award the 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom Movement in Iran.

Critical raw materials: securing the EU’s supply and sovereignty
MEPs will debate and take a final vote on Tuesday on plans to boost the EU’s supply of strategic raw materials.

MEPs to adopt recommendations on mental health and non-communicable diseases
Plenary will vote on two own-initiative reports addressing ongoing challenges for mental health and non-communicable diseases in EU and national health policies.

Spain’s Pedro Sánchez to discuss outcome of Spanish Presidency with MEPs
On Wednesday at 10.30, President of the Spanish Government Pedro Sánchez will summarise the results of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU’s six months.

MEPs to support EU-wide recognition of parenthood
MEPs are set to endorse rules to ensure that children enjoy the same rights under national law in another member state, particularly for custody, maintenance or succession.

Gaza: Parliament to urge for hostages’ release and a humanitarian ceasefire
With the war in the Gaza Strip raging on, MEPs will assess the latest developments, in a debate with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell on Tuesday afternoon.

Taking stock of the “defence of democracy” package
On Tuesday afternoon, MEPs will assess the Commission’s proposals to defend European democracy it is set to present on the same day.

Parliament’s priorities for the 14-15 December European Council
In a debate with Council and Commission on Wednesday morning, MEPs will present their demands and expectations one day ahead of the EU summit on 14-15 December.

Hate speech and hate crime must become crimes under EU law
Parliament is set to call on the Council to finally act to tackle hate speech and hate crime in the EU, in a debate on Wednesday and a vote on Thursday.

European elections: MEPs to vote on proposals for the lead candidate system
The proposals for the 2024 elections include a mechanism to elect the Commission President, as well as ways to increase turnout and enhance democratic processes.

Other topics on the agenda
Other topics on the agenda this week include:

The environmental consequences of Russia’s war against Ukraine
On Tuesday, MEPs will discuss with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell the environmental destruction caused by Russia in its war against Ukraine.

MEPs to call for a strengthened partnership with the US
In the context of deteriorating global security, transatlantic unity is more important than ever, MEPs are set to stress in a report.

Resolutions on human rights and democracy
Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights, democracy and rule of law topics on Wednesday afternoon, followed by votes on Thursday.

MEPs to debate EU economic security amid geopolitical tensions
On Tuesday afternoon, MEPs will discuss the European Economic Security Strategy with the Council and Commission, and are set to touch on competitiveness and supply chain resilience.

The EU must respond to Chinese efforts to change the global rules-based order
MEPs are set to call for pragmatic EU engagement with China on global challenges while continuing to confront Beijing over its severe human rights abuses.

Court of Auditors: MEPs to vote on Swedish and Portuguese candidates
On Tuesday, Parliament will vote on whether to support the candidacies of Hans...
Lindblad and João Leão, nominated respectively by Sweden and Portugal.

Frontex: MEPs to demand effective border agency, respect of fundamental rights
The agency can play a key support role in managing the EU’s external borders, but it must be transparent and respect fundamental rights, MEPs say.

New scheme to make personal health data more accessible across the EU
On Wednesday, MEPs will vote on a proposal for a European Health Data Space to ease electronic access to health data, also when patients are in other EU countries.

Eliminating remaining barriers to online shopping in the EU
MEPs want EU rules on geo-blocking to be better enforced and for audio-visual services to be included.

Breakfast directives: MEPs to review honey, fruit juice and jam labelling rules
Parliament will vote on its position on revised rules for more accurate labelling of a number of agri-food products to help consumers make informed and healthier choices.

MEPs to sound alarm about addictive digital services
Parliament will vote on a text calling for the development of ethical digital products, that do not rely on dark patterns and addictive designs.

Slovakia: MEPs to debate fight against corruption and rule of law situation
The impact of the announced reform of the criminal code on Slovakia’s efforts to fight corruption will be debated with Commission and Council on Wednesday afternoon.

Parliament to debate the outcome of COP28 climate talks
On Thursday, MEPs will debate with Commission and Council representatives the conclusions of the UN COP28 Climate Change Conference.
Further information
Draft agenda
Follow the plenary live
Press conferences and other events
EP Multimedia Centre
Election Press Kit

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Jina Mahsa Amini and Iranian women protest movement to receive Sakharov Prize

On Tuesday at 11.30, President Roberta Metsola will award the 2023 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought to Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom Movement in Iran.

Jina Mahsa Amini was a 22-year-old Iranian Kurdish woman, who died in September 2022, following physical abuse at the hands of the Iranian security services, while in custody. Her death sparked massive women-led protests in Iran against the hijab law and other discriminatory laws.

Afsoon Najafi and Mersedeh Shahinkar, Iranian women's rights defenders, are expected to be present at the ceremony in Strasbourg.

A press conference by President Metsola and the laureates will take place before the ceremony at 11.00 CET on Tuesday 12 December, in Parliament's Daphne Caruana Galizia press conference room.

The 2023 Sakharov Prize laureates, finalists and representatives will also participate in a hybrid media seminar organised by Parliament, from 9.00 CET to 11.00 CET on Tuesday 12 December. More information can be found here.

Read more about the European Parliament's 2023 Sakharov Prize finalists here.

Both the ceremony and the press conference will be broadcast on EP Live and EbS+.

MEPs in the Foreign Affairs and Development committees and the Subcommittee on Human Rights will hold a discussion with the Iranian laureates on Monday 11 December at 19.00 – 20.30 CET in Strasbourg.

Background

The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, named in honour of Soviet physicist and political dissident Andrei Sakharov, is awarded each year by the European Parliament. It was established in 1988 to honour individuals and organisations defending human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Procedure: Award ceremony

Award ceremony: Tuesday, 12 December

Press conference: Tuesday, 12 December at 11.00 CET, with European Parliament President
Roberta Metsola and representatives of Woman, Life, Freedom Movement in Iran.

Further information
Committee on Foreign Affairs
Subcommittee on Human Rights
Committee on Development
Press release - Sakharov Prize 2023: nine nominations announced (20.09.2023)
European Parliament Research Service - 2023 Sakharov Prize laureate: Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom Movement in Iran
Announcement of the Sakharov Prize 2023 laureate "Jina Mahsa Amini and the Woman, Life, Freedom Movement in Iran" by Roberta METSOLA, EP President (19.10.2023)
EP Multimedia Centre: Sakharov Prize 2023
Critical raw materials: securing the EU’s supply and sovereignty

MEPs will debate and take a final vote on Tuesday on plans to boost the EU’s supply of strategic raw materials.

The Critical Raw Materials Act, informally agreed with Council in November, should make the EU more competitive and sovereign by cutting red tape, promoting innovation along the entire value chain, and supporting SMEs. It also aims to boost research and the development of alternative materials and more environmentally-friendly mining and production methods.

The legislation will set up economic incentives and a more stable and secure business framework for mining and recycling projects, with faster and simpler authorisation procedures.

Background

Electric cars, solar panels and smartphones - all of them contain critical raw materials. They are pivotal for the EU’s green and digital transitions, and securing their supply is crucial for the European Union’s economic resilience, technological leadership, and strategic autonomy. Since the Russian war against Ukraine and an increasingly aggressive Chinese trade and industrial policy, cobalt, lithium and other raw materials have also become a geopolitical factor.

Procedure Code: 2023/0079(COD)

Debate: Tuesday 12 December

Vote: Tuesday 12 December

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure, first reading agreement

Further information

Press release on inter-institutional agreement (13.11.2023)
Profile of rapporteur Nicola Beer (Renew, DE)
Procedure file
EP research briefing: Critical raw materials act
Legislative train
Free photos, video and audio material
Parliament’s priorities for the 14-15 December European Council

In a debate with Council and Commission on Wednesday morning, MEPs will present their demands and expectations one day ahead of the EU summit on 14-15 December.

At their meeting in Brussels, heads of state or government are set to focus on the latest developments in Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine and continued EU support for the country and its people, on the situation in the Middle East and on EU enlargement policy, including the stabilisation and association process. They will also discuss the EU’s long-term 2021-2027 budget with a view to reaching an agreement, security and defence issues as well as external relations.

Debate: Wednesday, 13 December

Procedure: Council and Commission statements, no resolution
European elections: MEPs to vote on proposals for the lead candidate system

The proposals for the 2024 elections include a mechanism to elect the Commission President, as well as ways to increase turnout and enhance democratic processes.

Parliament is set to discuss the report on Monday and take a vote on Tuesday, after the vote was postponed at November's plenary session, to allow for more time for deliberation.

The draft text adopted by the Committee on Constitutional Affairs calls for a binding agreement between Parliament and the European Council on the so-called lead candidate process for the election of the Commission President. MEPs say that lead candidates, jointly with the presidents of the European political parties and of their respective parliamentary groups, should engage in negotiations immediately after the elections to put forward a common candidate, before the European Council can make a proposal.

Other proposals include measures to increase turnout and mobilise especially people living in a member state that is not their own, and a call for progress on election-related outstanding legislation (e.g. on the new European electoral law and rules for European political parties and foundations).

A press conference -still to be confirmed- with the co-rapporteurs Sven Simon (EPP, DE) and Domènec Ruiz Devesa (S&D, ES) will take place after the vote.

**Procedure code:** 2023/2016(INI)

**Debate:** Monday, 11 December

**Vote:** Tuesday, 12 December

**Procedure:** non-legislative resolution

**Press conference:** tbc, after the vote, at the Daphne Caruana Galizia press conference room (WEISS N -1/201) in Strasbourg and remotely.
Further information
Press release after the committee vote (25.10.2023)
Draft report on the European Elections 2024
Procedure file
Profile of the co-rapporteur Sven Simon (EPP, DE)
Profile of the co-rapporteur Domèneç Ruiz Devesa (S&D, ES)

Committee on Constitutional Affairs
EP Research Service Study - “Spitzenkandidaten or the lead candidate process: Ways to Europeanise elections to the European Parliament” (09.06.2023)
Free photos, video and audio material (European elections 2024)
Spain’s Pedro Sánchez to discuss outcome of Spanish Presidency with MEPs

On Wednesday at 10.30, President of the Spanish Government Pedro Sánchez will summarise the results of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU’s six months.

Sánchez, head of the Spanish Government since June 2018, was reappointed on 16 November, following the legislative elections in July 2023.

The Spanish Presidency set as its priorities reindustrialising the EU and ensuring its open strategic autonomy, advancing the green transition and environmental adaptation, promoting greater social and economic justice, and strengthening European unity.

EP President Metsola and President of the Government Sánchez will have a bilateral meeting before the debate.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements, without resolution

Debate: Wednesday, 13 December

Further information
Webpage of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU
Free photos, videos and audio material
Gaza: Parliament to urge for hostages’ release and a humanitarian ceasefire

With the war in the Gaza Strip raging on, MEPs will assess the latest developments, in a debate with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell on Tuesday afternoon.

While Israeli forces continue advancing in the south of the Gaza Strip, MEPs and Mr Borrell are set to debate the need for a humanitarian ceasefire to minimise further civilian casualties and allow aid to reach those in need. They will also reiterate their call on Hamas to release all remaining hostages that were taken captive during the terrorist group’s attack on Israel on 7 October, which claimed the lives of around 1 200 people, and discuss the prospect of achieving a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine once peace has been restored.

According to Hamas-run authorities in Gaza, over 16 000 people have been killed in the densely populated coastal enclave since the start of the latest war.

Debate: Tuesday 12 December

Procedure: Statement by the High Representative, no resolution

Further information
Press release: “MEPs condemn Hamas attack on Israel and call for a humanitarian pause” (19.10.2023)
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
New scheme to make personal health data more accessible across the EU

On Wednesday, MEPs will vote on a proposal for a European Health Data Space to ease electronic access to health data, also when patients are in other EU countries.

The draft position, prepared by the Environment and Civil Liberties committees, aims to give citizens the means to control their personal healthcare data and facilitate secure sharing for research and public health purposes. MEPs will debate the proposals on Tuesday afternoon, and vote on their negotiating mandate ahead of talks with the Council on Wednesday.

The law would give patients the right to access their personal health data (including patient summaries, electronic prescriptions, medical imagery and laboratory results - known as primary use) everywhere in the EU, and allow health professionals to access data on their patients, strictly based on what is necessary for a given treatment. It would also allow for aggregated health data to be shared safely to promote research into rare and other diseases (secondary use). Noting the sensitivity of this type of data, MEPs want to ensure that people can opt out of the secondary use of their data. Explicit permission would be required before sensitive data can be used.

Debate: Tuesday, 12 December

Vote: Wednesday 13 December

Press conference: Wednesday 13 December at 14.00 CET with co-rapporteurs Tomislav Sokos (EPP, HR) and Annalisa Tardino (ID, IT)

Further information
Procedure file
Profile of the co-rapporteur Annalisa Tardino (ID, Italy)
Profile of the co-rapporteur Tomislav Sokol (EPP, Croatia)
EP Think Tank: European health data space
Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee
Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee
Breakfast directives: MEPs to review honey, fruit juice and jam labelling rules

Parliament will vote on its position on revised rules for more accurate labelling of a number of agri-food products to help consumers make informed and healthier choices.

As consumers have shown a particular interest in the geographical origin of several products, MEPs want the country of origin of honey and fruit used to manufacture juice and jam to be indicated on the front-label of honey, fruit juices and jams. If the honey or fruit used in these products originates in more than one country, the countries of origin shall be indicated on the label in descending order according to their proportion, the report by the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety Committee says.

To further limit honey fraud, including the use of sugar syrups in honey that are very difficult to detect, MEPs also want to set up a traceability system along the supply chain to track the origin of the honey. Beekeepers in the EU with fewer than 150 hives would be exempted.

The vote will take place on Tuesday.

Background

The revision of EU marketing standards for certain 'breakfast' directives was proposed by the European Commission on 21 April 2023 to update current standards that are more than 20 years old.

Procedure code: 2023/0105(COD)

Vote: Tuesday 12 December 2023

Procedure: Ordinary legislative procedure

Further information

Procedure file
EP Research: Revision of EU marketing standards for certain 'breakfast' directives (26.10.2023)
MEPs to call for a strengthened partnership with the US

In the context of deteriorating global security, transatlantic unity is more important than ever, MEPs are set to stress in a report.

Multiple global crises - from Russia’s illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, to an increasingly tense and at times violent Middle East, and a more and more assertive China - are a growing challenge to the EU’s interests, security and prosperity, MEPs are expected to warn in their report on EU-US relations.

They are set to call on the EU to work towards an even stronger partnership with the US, to defend multilateralism and tackle the global challenges and new geopolitical realities that affect their common values.

The debate will take place on Tuesday, and the report will be put to a vote on Wednesday.

Debate: Tuesday 12 December
Vote: Wednesday 13 December
Procedure: Own-initiative report

Further information
Profile of rapporteur Tonino Picula (S&D, Croatia)
Procedure file
EP Think Tank : EU-US relations
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
The EU must respond to Chinese efforts to change the global rules-based order

MEPs are set to call for pragmatic EU engagement with China on global challenges while continuing to confront Beijing over its severe human rights abuses.

In a report, to be debated on Tuesday and voted on by Parliament on Wednesday, MEPs recognise China’s dual role as a partner and increasingly as a competitor and systemic rival to the EU. They say the Beijing government is strengthening its role and influence over international institutions, with the intention - and economic, technological and military means - to reshape the international rules-based order.

MEPs also point out that both the EU and China have a shared interest in pursuing active and stable relations based on international law, balanced engagement, and shared global responsibilities. They also highlight however that China is moving into a new era of security and control characterised by increasing internal repression and an increasingly assertive economic and foreign policy.

The draft report with recommendations, prepared by the Foreign Affairs Committee, will be available here.

On Tuesday morning, Parliament will also debate EU-Taiwan trade and investment relations with the Commission. A resolution will be put to a vote on the same day.

Debates: Tuesday 12 December

Votes: EU-China: Wednesday 13 December, EU-Taiwan: Tuesday 12 December

Procedure: Own-initiative report, Oral Question with resolution

Further information
Profile of rapporteur Hilde Vautmans (Renew Europe, Belgium)
Procedure file
Press release after the committee vote on EU-Taiwan trade and investment relations
EP Think Tank: EU-China relations
EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material
Frontex: MEPs to demand effective border agency, respect of fundamental rights

The agency can play a key support role in managing the EU’s external borders, but it must be transparent and respect fundamental rights, MEPs say.

Parliament will wrap up the investigation into the border agency carried out by the Frontex scrutiny group with a debate on Wednesday afternoon and a vote on a resolution on Thursday. The draft text acknowledges that Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, has made managerial changes in the last few years but insists that more still need to be made. MEPs are set to raise concerns about the border policies and situation in Greece, Lithuania and Hungary, and call for Frontex operations in member states to be scaled down where there are allegations of a lack of respect for EU values.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements, with resolution

Debate: Wednesday, 13 December

Vote: Thursday, 14 December

Further information
Press release following the vote in the Civil Liberties Committee (26.10.2023)
Frontex webpage
EP Research Service: European Parliament scrutiny of Frontex
Free photos, videos and audio material
MEPs to debate EU economic security amid geopolitical tensions

On Tuesday afternoon, MEPs will discuss the European Economic Security Strategy with the Council and Commission, and are set to touch on competitiveness and supply chain resilience.

MEPs are set to focus on how to increase the EU’s independence from third countries amid growing geopolitical tensions and technological shifts, while staying economically open and dynamic. As risks in an interconnected global economy spread, MEPs are expected to discuss strengthening the EU single market, enhancing the economic security of the Union, collaborating with the broadest possible range of partners through trade agreements, and consolidating the international rules-based economic order.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements

Debate: Tuesday, 12 December
The environmental consequences of Russia’s war against Ukraine

On Tuesday, MEPs will discuss with EU Foreign Policy Chief Josep Borrell the environmental destruction caused by Russia in its war against Ukraine.

Russia's war has caused massive air, water, land and soil pollution, as well as significant damage to ecosystems, with the risk of spillover into neighbouring countries. Estimates based on Ukraine's environmental inspections show that Russia's invasion has inflicted roughly €52.4 billion in environmental damage.

Russia’s destruction of the Kakhovka Dam, causing catastrophic flooding and submerging thousands of hectares of land, has been condemned by the EU as an act of ‘ecocide’.

In the debate with EU diplomacy Chief Borrell, MEPs are set to highlight the importance of holding Russia accountable, with Ukraine having stated its determination to make Russia pay reparations for the environmental damage.

Debate: Tuesday, 12 December

Further information
European Parliament Research Service  “Russia's war on Ukraine: High environmental toll”: EU Statement on “Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine - Environmental, humanitarian and economic consequences of the destruction of the Kakhovka HPP dam for the OSCE region”
Hate speech and hate crime must become crimes under EU law

Parliament is set to call on the Council to finally act to tackle hate speech and hate crime in the EU, in a debate on Wednesday and a vote on Thursday.

The draft report asks for progress on classifying hate speech and hate crime as “EU crimes” - a process stalled in Council since 2022. MEPs highlight the need to ensure all individuals and groups that can become targets of hate are protected, and to ensure that freedom of expression is not exploited to protect hate speech and hate crimes. They are also set to call for an “open-ended” approach whereby incidents would be assessed based on their contextual circumstances.

So-called EU crimes are crimes of a particularly serious nature with a cross-border dimension, as set out in Article 83(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU. Currently, member states’ laws deal with hate speech and hate crime in different ways, while EU-wide rules are limited in their scope to race, skin colour, religion, descent or national or ethnic origin.

Procedure code: 2023/2068(INI)

Debate: Wednesday, 13 December

Vote: Thursday, 14 December

Procedure: non-legislative resolution

Further information
MEPs call on Council to designate hate speech, hate crime as crimes under EU law (13.11.2023)
Rapporteur: Maite Pagazaurtundúa (Renew, Spain)
Procedure file
Legislative train
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
EP Think Tank: Combating hate speech and hate crime in the EU
Free photos, video and audio material
Taking stock of the “defence of democracy” package

On Tuesday afternoon, MEPs will assess the Commission’s proposals to defend European democracy it is set to present on the same day.

Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced the defence of democracy package in her State of the European Union speech in September 2022. The directive on transparency of interest representation will be complemented by two non-legislative recommendations to protect EU democracy from covert foreign influence.

The proposals are expected to promote free and fair elections, step up the fight against disinformation, and support media freedom and pluralism. The package, originally expected in June 2023, was delayed to allow for more time for consultation with stakeholders and to conduct a full impact assessment.

Debate: Tuesday, 12 December

Further information
2022 State of the Union Address by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen
Legislative train
Defending European democracy – Commission Communication
Free photos, video and audio material
MEPs to support EU-wide recognition of parenthood

MEPs are set to endorse rules to ensure that children enjoy the same rights under national law in another member state, particularly for custody, maintenance or succession.

The draft law requires EU member states to recognise parenthood established by another EU country. Governments will not have to change their national rules on parenthood, such as accepting surrogacy, but they would have to accept parenthood established by another EU country irrespective of how the child was conceived, born or the type of family it has. The law also introduces a European Parenthood Certificate (EPC), which will not replace national documents but can be used in their stead and will be available in all EU languages.

Background

Two million children may currently face a situation in which their parents are not recognised as such in another EU country. Parliament called for cross-border recognition of adoptions in 2017 and welcomed the Commission’s initiative in its 2022 resolution. After Parliament’s vote, the final decision on the legislation will be taken unanimously by member states, as family law falls under national jurisdiction.

Procedure code: 2022/0402(CNS)

Procedure: CNS - Consultation procedure (Regulation)

Debate: Wednesday 13 December

Vote: Thursday 14 December

Further information

Press release after committee vote (7.11.2023)
Procedure file
Legislative train
Think Tank EP: Cross-Border Legal Recognition of Parenthood in the EU (19.4.2023)
Think Tank EP: Recognition of parenthood in the EU (31.10.2023)
EP Think Tank: Private international law: Parenthood
MEPs to adopt recommendations on mental health and non-communicable diseases

Plenary will vote on two own-initiative reports addressing ongoing challenges for mental health and non-communicable diseases in EU and national health policies.

In a draft report on mental health, debated on Monday and put to a vote on Tuesday, MEPs urge member states to prioritise and improve access to mental health services for vulnerable groups, to promote initiatives to combat stigma, exclusion and discrimination of people with mental health conditions, and to ensure that all EU citizens have access to quality and affordable mental health services. They want a long-term, comprehensive and integrated EU Mental Health Strategy, building on a recent Commission communication.

Draft recommendations on non-communicable diseases (NCDs), put to a vote on Wednesday, focus on prevention and early diagnosis (addressing the main factors that substantially increase the risk of NCDs and introducing targeted health checks of high-risk individuals) and closer cooperation between national health authorities.

Background

The two reports, prepared by the Subcommittee on Public Health, were adopted earlier this month by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, obesity, chronic respiratory diseases, mental disorders or cancer are responsible for 80% of the disease burden of EU member states’ healthcare expenditures and cause 90% of all deaths in the EU countries. Over 150 million Europeans are estimated to live with a mental health condition.

Procedure files: 2023/2074(INI), 2023/2075(INI)

Procedure: own-initiative procedure

Debate: Mental Health: Monday 11 December

Votes:Mental Health: Tuesday, 12 December 2023, Non-communicable diseases: Wednesday 13 December

Further information

Procedure file - mental health
Procedure file - NCDs
Multimedia centre: EU health policy
EP Think Tank : European health data space (Intranet)
Parliament to debate the outcome of COP28 climate talks

On Thursday, MEPs will debate with Commission and Council representatives the conclusions of the UN COP28 Climate Change Conference.

Parliament adopted its demands ahead of this year’s global climate talks on 21 November 2023.

An official delegation led by Chair Peter Liese (EPP, DE) and Vice-Chair Mohammed Chahim (S&D, NL) will be in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, between 8 and 12 December to participate in the COP28.

Background

COP28 takes place from 30 November to 12 December 2023 in Dubai (United Arab Emirates).

The Paris Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016 and, as part of it, a Global Stocktake takes place every five years. The first-ever stocktake, scheduled to conclude at COP28, aims to provide an overall picture of its implementation progress.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements, no resolution

Debate: Thursday, 14 December

Further information

Video statement with MEP Peter Liese (EPP, DE), Chair of the EP Delegation to COP28 COP28 (UNFCCC website)
EP Research - At a glance: COP28 climate change conference in Dubai (November 2023)
EP Study: International Climate Negotiations - issues at stake in view of the COP28 UN Climate Change Conference in Dubai and beyond (November 2023)
Free photos, videos and audio material (COP28)
Slovakia: MEPs to debate fight against corruption and rule of law situation

The impact of the announced reform of the criminal code on Slovakia’s efforts to fight corruption will be debated with Commission and Council on Wednesday afternoon.

On 6 December, the new Slovak government tabled a draft law to overhaul the country’s penal code. If approved by its parliament, the special prosecutor’s office dealing with the most serious crimes and corruption would be dismantled. The government also intends to soften penalties for corruption offences. Several investigators and police officers looking into corruption charges have already faced repercussions from the new government, such as being dismissed, suspended or sidelined from these investigations.

Prime Minister Robert Fico wants the draft law to be adopted under the urgency procedure. Slovak President Zuzana Čaputová has already said she would veto the law. Critics have warned that dismantling the special prosecutor’s office could have an impact on the ongoing investigation into the murder of journalist Ján Kuciak and his fiancée Martina Kušnírová in 2018.

A resolution will be put to a vote during the 15-18 January 2024 plenary session.

Procedure: Council and Commission statements - Planned dissolution of key anti-corruption structures in Slovakia and its implications on the Rule of Law - no resolution

Debate: Wednesday 13 December

Vote: January 2024 plenary session

Further information
EP Multimedia Centre: rule of law
MEPs to sound alarm about addictive digital services

Parliament will vote on a text calling for the development of ethical digital products, that do not rely on dark patterns and addictive designs.

In a vote on Tuesday, MEPs are set to warn of the addictive nature of certain digital services, which exploit people's vulnerabilities to capture their attention and monetise their data. The draft text urges the Commission to present legislation against addictive design and to assess, and prohibit certain harmful design features like infinite scroll, default auto play and constant push notifications. MEPs are particularly worried about the impact of digital addiction on child mental and physical health (e.g. loss of concentration and cognitive ability, burnout, stress, depression, limited physical activity).

Procedure code: 2023/2043(INI)

Procedure type: Own-initiative report

Vote: Tuesday, 12 December

Further information
EP Press release after committee vote (25.10.2023)
EP Study: Harmful internet use - Part I: Internet addiction and problematic use Draft report (08.11.2023)
Eliminating remaining barriers to online shopping in the EU

MEPs want EU rules on geo-blocking to be better enforced and for audio-visual services to be included.

On Tuesday, MEPs will vote on a report underscoring the need to re-assess the EU’s rules on geo-blocking, particularly in light of the accelerated digital transformation and surge in online shopping. They are expected to call on the Commission to eliminate existing barriers and revise the current framework by 2025, to also include audio-visual services. The draft text advocates for a gradual approach expanding access and availability of audio-visual content across borders, and a realistic timeline to allow the sector to adapt, ensuring cultural diversity and content quality is preserved.

The debate will take place on Monday evening.

Background

Over the last four years, consumers across the EU have benefited from rules enabling them to shop online and access services without facing restrictions based on nationality, place of residence, or establishment. On 30 November 2020, the Commission published its first evaluation examining the impact of these rules and exploring the potential extension to include specific digital services offering copyrighted content (such as e-books, music, software and online games), as well as audio-visual and transport services.

Procedure code: 2023/2019(INI)

Procedure type: Own-initiative report

Debate: Monday, 11 December

Vote: Tuesday, 12 December

Further information
Draft report on the implementation of the 2018 Geo-blocking Regulation in the digital single market

Geo-blocking in the EU (European Commission)
Court of Auditors: MEPs to vote on Swedish and Portuguese candidates

On Tuesday, Parliament will vote on whether to support the candidacies of Hans Lindblad and João Leão, nominated respectively by Sweden and Portugal.

The Committee on Budgetary Control supported both nominees following a hearing on 29 November 2023.

Portuguese nomination

João Leão has been Professor of Economics and Public Finance and Vice-Rector at the University Institute of Lisbon. From 2020 to 2022, he was Minister of State for Finance and between 2015 and 2020, Secretary of State for Budget. He holds a PhD in Economics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

The previous Portuguese European Court of Auditors member, João Figueiredo, died in office on 29 June 2021. His seat has been vacant since.

Swedish nomination

Hans Lindblad is currently Chair of the Swedish Government’s Productivity Commission. He was Director General of the Swedish National Debt Office from 2013 to 2022 and Chair of the Expert Group for Public Economics from 2013 to 2020. He holds a PhD in Economics from the University of Stockholm.

The mandate of the current Swedish member, Eva Lindström, expires on 29 February 2024.

Next steps

The final decision will be taken by EU member states.

The EU Treaty allows each member state to propose its candidate for the European Court of Auditors. Member states, after consulting Parliament, adopt the chosen nominees for a six-year term.

Further information

Press release after the committee vote (29.11.2023)
See the CV of Hans Lindblad (SE nominee)
See the CV of João Leão (PT nominee)
European Parliament Research Service Briefing: Nominations for Members of the European Court of Auditors: Sweden and Portugal (October 2023)
Resolutions on human rights and democracy

Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights, democracy and rule of law topics on Wednesday afternoon, followed by votes on Thursday.

- The unknown status of Mikalai Statkevich and the recent attacks on Belarusian politicians’ and activists’ family members;
- The Maasai Communities in Tanzania;
- The abduction of Tibetan children and forced assimilation practices through Chinese boarding schools in Tibet.

Debate: Wednesday 13 December
Vote: Thursday 14 December
Procedure: non-legislative resolutions

Further information

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

Other topics on the agenda this week include:

- EU Japan relations, Bûtikofer, vote Wednesday

- 30 years of Copenhagen criteria - giving further impetus to EU enlargement policy, vote Thursday

- Parliament's call for the Right to Disconnect – 3 years after, Commission Statement, Tuesday

- European Defence investment programme (EDIP) - Council and Commission statements, Wednesday

- EU strategy to assist young people facing the housing and cost of living crisis, topical debate, Wednesday

- Minimum requirements on minimum breaks, Virkkunen, debate Monday, vote Tuesday

- Role of tax policy in times of crisis, Peter-Hansen, debate Monday, vote Tuesday

- Small modular reactors, Bogovič, debate Monday, vote Tuesday

- Implementation of the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument – Global Europe, Tobé, Marques, Goerens, Gahler, vote Tuesday

- Increasing innovation, industrial and technological competitiveness, Penkova, vote Thursday

- Reshaping the future framework of EU structural funds to support regions particularly affected by challenges related to the automotive, green and digital transitions, Solís Pérez, vote Tuesday