



11-14 MARCH 2019

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

More Info: David Lundy +32 485 505 812, Ben Leung +32 470 880 965, Nikki Sullings +32 483 035 575 or Ziyad Lunat +32 499 632 314

www.guengl.eu

PRESS BRIEFING

Tuesday 12 March
@ 11.30
EP Press Room LOW
N-1/201

GUE/NGL PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question our MEPs on issues they are covering.

Interpretation: EN, FR, DE, ES, IT & PL

- Gabi Zimmer - European Council Meeting and Brexit
- Lynn Boylan - Climate Change debate
- Helmut Scholz - Restarting EU-US trade negotiations



Gabi Zimmer - European Council Meeting and Brexit

Debate: Wednesday

EU citizens should be free to decide on their economies, their investments and their political goals. But the European Semester does the exact opposite: a failed, authoritarian policy directed from the top. Member states are forced to implement austerity that have ushered in poverty, unemployment or precarious jobs upon citizens - especially in southern Europe. It prevents any improvement in social protection like investing in decent jobs. The European Parliament wasn't even consulted - the EU Council did it all. We therefore call for a radical change in EU's economic policy and the end of the European Semester.

On climate change, the Commission calls for zero emissions of CO2 by 2050. EU governments should follow this ambitious goal. However, the transition to an environmentally-friendly economy must be socially fair in order to create sustainable change. We, along with the Greens and S&D, have invited young climate activists to the plenary in order to listen to their proposals on how to speed up the fight against global warming.

Lastly, we may be on the brink of Brexit but a chaotic exit is still a real possibility. The British government is playing for time and is still not proposing viable solutions. For us, Brexit can only be postponed if there are good and valid reasons. We will see how the votes go in the House of Commons this coming week.



Lynn Boylan - Climate change debate

Debate: Wednesday, Vote: Thursday

This is an opportunity for MEPs to put pressure on the Council and Commission to commit to raising EU climate ambition to a level that is in line with keeping global warming below 1.5°C and our historic responsibility for emissions. The EU is full of climate contradictions that undermines its climate action. We need a radical response to climate change.



Helmut Scholz - Restarting EU-US trade negotiations

Debate: Wednesday, Vote: Thursday

Trump is threatening 25% punitive tariffs on European cars should the EU not agree to a trade agreement with the US. That's blackmail! Using cars to force the Commission into accepting a deal on agriculture products is against the interests of EU citizens who had protested loudly against TTIP. We urge the Council not to give a mandate to these negotiations. Don't reward Trump for his bullying.





Dennis De Jong – European Criminal Records Information System

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

ECRIS-TCN originally seemed like a useful tool for judges to know about past offences of persons who stand trial. However, during the course of the negotiations with the Council, it was agreed to also include data of dual nationality holders (EU- and third country) which is a discrimination when compared to EU citizens whose data will not be stored in the database. Member states may also use the database for any other objective, if they notify the Commission, which violates the principle of proportionality. The outcome of these negotiations must be rejected.



Marie-Christine Vergiat – Visa Information System

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

The reform of the VIS truly illustrates the abuse and shift in use of the EU information systems for law enforcement purposes. The control of borders, migration, fighting crime and terrorism are now deemed more important than our fundamental principles. The list of abuse goes on: the misuse of our collective data, lowering the age in collecting biometric data, allowing law enforcement authorities to freely exchange data... it's worse than Big Brother!



Martina Anderson – Asylum and Migration Fund

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

Having met with numerous NGOs and civil society organisations, we've succeeded in strengthening the protections with children's rights and an increased role for local and regional authorities through direct provision funding and the 'partnership principle' article. We've also secured a 5% maximum cap on funding in a third country and stopping any legal entities established in third countries to be eligible for the fund. Lastly, the AMF will not allow measures for return and readmission when involving third countries.



Cornelia Ernst – Internal Security Fund

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

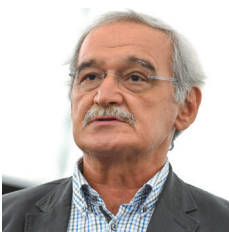
For the next funding period, the money available under the ISF will be tripled to €2.5 billion. This will be used for more intrusive surveillance measures and databases in the EU, with interoperability being one aspect of it. The ISF will also be used to fund a new 'intelligence culture' and cooperation between police and intelligence services. Totally unacceptable.



Takis Hadjigeorgiou - 2018 Report on Turkey

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

It is commonly accepted that no progress has been made on Turkey's accession process. On the contrary, the situation inside Turkey remains at a critical juncture and this is reflected in the report. That said, as long as the Cyprus problem remains unresolved, there's no real progress. Unfortunately, the idea of a new partnership through an update of the Customs Union doesn't solve the important issues. Furthermore, it's exactly what Turkey wants.



Nikolaos Chountis – European Solidarity Corps

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

Solidarity is a common value and young people can contribute to the cause through various activities whilst gaining useful experience and skills for their personal development. But engaging with for-profit organisations and introducing the occupational strand, the European Solidarity Corps has undermined the true meaning of EU solidarity. What's more is that it does not create a fully protected environment for young people.



European United Left • Nordic Green Left
EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

www.guengl.eu

Follow GUE/NGL on:

