



10-13 DECEMBER 2018

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

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Martina Anderson - Brexit

Debate: **Wednesday**

The negotiations on the Withdrawal Agreement are over. It is now for the British parliament to decide whether or not to live up to their commitments and accept it. If they don't then they have the option of crashing out of the EU at the end of March. This would mean no transition period. The Agreement is not ideal but at least it provides some protection for citizens. It does not fully live up to the promises on Ireland of the Joint Report in December 2017 but at least it avoids physical infrastructure on the border.

Citizens need to be at the centre of the considerations for the future relationship - in the EU, in Britain, and not forgetting the rights guaranteed in the North of Ireland under the Good Friday Agreement. If the Agreement is rejected then we must find ways to ring-fence citizens' rights. And Europe needs to be involved in the discussion on reunification that is already under way in Ireland.



Helmut Scholz - JEFTA agreement

Debate: **Tuesday**, Vote: **Wednesday**

As with CETA, there are many problems with JEFTA. Indeed, Japan's been forced to abolish many of its existing standards in order to facilitate market access for European companies. In return, the EU Commission has also lowered its standards in data protection so that Japanese corporations can have unhindered access to ours. Deutsche Bank will be happy too, as regulation of financial services will in future be decided by a bilateral committee of civil servants meeting in a back chamber, advised by experts of the stakeholders. What economic success justifies this reduction in democratic control? GUE/NGL will be voting against JEFTA.



Marie-Christine Vergiat - Humanitarian visa re-vote

Vote: **Tuesday**

At least 2133 people have already died in the Mediterranean this year - with more than 30 000 over the past twenty years. 90% of those who have been granted asylum by an EU member state had arrived through irregular channels with the vast majority coming via the Mediterranean. Since 2014, we've been proposing humanitarian visas as one of the solutions to stop this 'hecatomb'. But member states opposed it. To pass, this vote needs an absolute majority of MEPs' backing. GUE/NGL will be back and we will be voting in favour!

Marie-Christine Vergiat - Terrorism Committee report

Debate: **Tuesday**, Vote: **Wednesday**

After months of negotiations, we have ended up with a terrible report that conflates so many things - especially its references to migrants that stigmatises an entire group of people in Europe. Yes, EU citizens have a right to safety and security but they are also entitled to *sureté* - to be free from state oppression. Yet, this report ignores all the violations of the fundamental rights and freedoms that have been committed in the name of 'fighting' terrorism - forgetting our basic principles. It's disproportionate and completely unnecessary.





Marisa Matias - Horizon Europe

Debate: Tuesday, Vote Wednesday

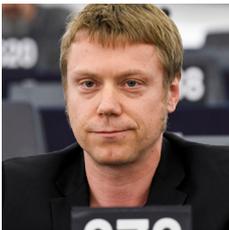
During the negotiations, we managed to once again guarantee proper funding for social sciences and humanities, increasing the role of SMEs and securing more funds to more programmes as part of a restructured budget. That said, the talks were difficult and with all the compromises, we aren't completely happy with the final agreement. So we'll try and introduce some changes to the final text before the vote on areas such as innovation principles and security matters. Overall though, Horizon Europe is one of the few genuine European programmes that is aimed at cooperation and sustainable development. It is also an important tool for researchers across Europe - particularly those without proper public investment for research in their own countries.



Neoklis Sylikiotis - Horizon Europe

Debate: Tuesday, Vote Wednesday

The Parliament's report is an improvement on the Commission's proposal as it foresees the integration of social science and humanities across all activities developed under the programme. It underlines that research ought to address global challenges listed under the UN Sustainable Development Goals such as climate change. More funds as well for SMEs and better working conditions for researchers. Crucially, it emphasises that any research on defence will not be funded by Horizon. That said, we want to delete all references to the European Defence Fund. Instead, we must enhance all references to human rights in any agreements with third countries.



Martin Schirdewan - Digital taxation

Debate: Wednesday, Vote: Thursday

The economics committee's approval of the digital tax package is a critical step in our fight against tax dumping by multinational internet firms. Despite the Conservatives and Liberals blocking more ambitious proposals, the Parliament's text is significantly better than what the Commission had put forward. Yet, as important as it is, the digital tax package is no panacea for the ailments of our current tax system. We will continue our fight for a just tax system.



Patrick Le Hyaric - Carcinogens and mutagens at work

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

Through our work in the Employment Committee, we helped push for new exposure limits on eight other cancer-causing substances, protecting workers from exposure to carcinogens and mutagen products. But much more needs to be done to drastically reduce the 100 000 deaths annually due to work-related cancers. A Europe that truly protects must be bold in protecting its workers' health.



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