



08-11 FEBRUARY 2021

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

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ONLINE PRESS BRIEFING
European Parliament
Anna Polykovskaya,
PHS 0A50
TUE 09 FEB
10:30 CET

PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question the Co-presidents of The Left in the European Parliament on issues they are covering. Physical & remote participation possible.

Manon Aubry (France Insoumise, France)
Martin Schirdewan (Die Linke, Germany)



Manon Aubry - The EU's vaccine debacle

Debate: Wednesday

What's happening with the vaccines is a scandal. The Commission is putting profits of global corporations ahead of citizens and our health. This is unacceptable! Ursula von der Leyen must answer MEPs' questions when she appears in the plenary. Our group will have the opportunity to do this on Monday. Citizens do not want redacted contracts - they demand transparency. We will be calling for the establishment of a Committee of Inquiry to investigate the fiasco, and hold accountable those who are responsible. Vaccines and treatments must be treated as global public good: accessible to every country and protected from the markets.



Martin Schirdewan - Democratic scrutiny of social media and the protection of fundamental rights

Debate: Wednesday

In order to preserve the freedom of expression whilst also guaranteeing consistent action against hatred, hate speech and illegal content, a democratisation of the internet is required. The control over content and user accounts can no longer be left to the profit-driven Big Tech. Instead of liability privileges for companies based on the Good Samaritan principle, independent supervisory bodies are necessary. The protection of personal data must also be at the forefront of this. That is why we advocate a ban on personalised advertising and AIDA marketing models. Since the Big Tech won't self-regulate, it is our responsibility to do it for them.



Dimitrios Papadimoulis - Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF)

Debate: Tuesday, vote: from Monday

The RRF - the issuance of common EU debt and grants for the weakest member states - is a positive but insufficient step. What we now need is significant debt relief and a radical change of the neoliberal Stability and Growth Pact in order to prevent a new round of strict austerity, as well as a new debt crisis.





Özlem Demirel - In-work poverty report

Debate: Monday, vote: Tuesday

The social situation in Europe is alarming and is of huge concern to us. We need decisive measures and minimum standards to protect people from poverty and for reducing injustice. This includes creating the conditions for strong collective agreements, minimum wages that guarantee a life in dignity, affordable housing and good education. Social concerns cannot continue to play second-fiddle to the free movement of goods, services and capital. This has to stop.



Malin Björk - Poland's abortion ban

Debate: Tuesday

Right-wing conservative forces in Poland and across the globe are trying to control women's bodies by banning access to abortion care. It is a brutal attack on women's rights. It is also a clear breach of the Rule of Law, as the PiS party used the constitutional court to further tighten abortion law. There can be no Rule of Law in a country where the government controls the entire judiciary system.



María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop - Poland's abortion ban

Debate: Tuesday

The abortion ban in Poland shows two things: that the PiS government has turned the Polish constitutional court into a puppet, and that the ultra-conservatives' crusade against the Rule of Law has women's rights at the top of the list. If the EU allows this to happen, many more monsters will be let through that door.



María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop - Anti-trafficking

Debate: Monday, vote: Tuesday

Human trafficking is one of the most despicable crimes in the European Union. Almost 75% of the victims are women and girls, mostly for sexual exploitation. However, we are also talking about slavery on farms and in people's homes, as well as forced begging and delinquency. Ten years on from the adoption of the Anti-Trafficking Directive, its implementation has been very poor, with many of the victims remaining invisible and virtually nothing in place to give them protection.