



DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

State of the Union*Iratxe García Pérez - President of the S&D Group*

Next Wednesday, we expect to hear a clear commitment by the President of the European Commission promising to accomplish all the pending reforms before the end of this term. In particular, the EU must finalise the legislation for a Green Deal transition, including Nature Restoration and Air Quality, but also strengthen the social pillar to help citizens cope with the rising cost of living; ensure gender equality; put in place a permanent fiscal capacity for the EU; adopt a Pact on Migration based on solidarity, and take a definitive step towards enlargement.

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DEBATE ON MONDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER; VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

Amendments to the Parliament's Rules of Procedure with a view to strengthening integrity, independence and accountability*Gabriele Bischoff - vice-president of the S&D Group and Chief Negotiator on the topic in the EP Committee on constitutional affairs*

After the vote in the EP Committee on constitutional affairs, it is clear for all to see who is in favour of ambitious reform and who tries to water down the rules. The EPP Group has not shied away from forming an alliance with the right and far right forces in this House to minimise the changes to the current rules. Together with ECR and ID, they voted against an independent oversight of Members' conduct and they voted against making the European Parliament a more open and more transparent institution. My draft report was the result of challenging negotiations with other political groups. Even though a majority of political groups signalled their support during the negotiations for more ambitious rules for specific provisions, these were dismissed by the EPP. For the sake of greater transparency and accountability, I hope that the EPP Group will come to its senses and support the draft report in Plenary next week. These are simple and effective rule changes that aim to strengthen trust and confidence in democratic institutions.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER; VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

Ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe*Javi López - S&D MEP and European Parliament's Chief Negotiator on the Air Quality Directive*

Air pollution kills 300,000 people annually in the EU and exacerbates climate change. We therefore must do more to safeguard Europeans against the harmful effects of air pollution. Next week, the European Parliament under our leadership will vote in Strasbourg on the revision of the Ambient Air Quality Directive. This is a pivotal moment for public health and the environment. Our draft proposal strengthens the initial proposal from the European Commission in crucial ways. We have included a clear requirement to align EU air quality standards with WHO guidelines; strengthened public information by calling for standardised air quality indices across Europe; and advocated for a compensation mechanism for those affected by poor air quality. The time of polluted air must come to an end. This is not just an environmental issue; it's a matter of life and death.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER

EU-Tunisia Agreement - aspects related to external migration policy*Matjaž Nemeč - S&D MEP and Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with the Maghreb countries and the Arab Maghreb Union*



"We wanted this debate to put pressure on the Commission to reconsider the EU-Tunisia agreement. Foreign Affairs must comply with the Treaty defending Human rights and Democracy. Yet, the EU support included in the Memorandum of Understanding is not conditional on the Rule of Law or democratic improvements, nor contains legal guarantees for the safe use of EU money. Compensating President Saied's actions to halt the flow of sub-Saharan migrants goes clearly in the opposite direction. Externalisation of migration does not work.

"We denounce the complete lack of transparency about where to and how all the money offered by the EU Commission will go, and we disapprove of the lack of involvement by the EU Parliament. Instead of using an authoritarian regime to stop migrants, only to please right-wing forces in Europe, we should support democracy and engage with Tunisian Civil society that is the closest to Europe in the region."

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER; VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER

Relations with Belarus and Address by Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya on Wednesday, 13 September
Juozas Olekas - S&D MEP and Chair of the European Parliament's Delegation for relations with Belarus

On Wednesday, the leader of the democratic forces of Belarus, Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya will address the European Parliament in Strasbourg, to mark the three years anniversary since the massively falsified presidential election in Belarus. The same day, I will have the honour to chair the 2023 edition of the 'Kalinowski Conference' in Strasbourg. This conference brings together representatives of the democratic forces and civil society of Belarus that have been brutally repressed by the dictatorship. The S&D Group has invited four representatives of Belarussian Social Democrats in exile to join this event. The same evening, an exhibition on Belarussian political prisoners, co-sponsored by the S&D, will be opened. We strongly condemn the Lukashenka regime's increasingly ruthless repression of the people of Belarus and call for the immediate and unconditional release of all 1500 political prisoners and all other persons arbitrarily detained. In order to acknowledge the Lukashenka regime's complicity in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, we call on the EU to impose comparable sanctions on Belarus as it has done on Russia.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER; VOTE ON THURSDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER

Regulation of prostitution in the EU

Maria Noichl - S&D MEP, European Parliament's chief negotiator on the topic and spokesperson of the S&D Group in the EP's Committee on women's right and gender equality

On Thursday, the European Parliament will vote on a report calling for a Europe-wide approach to prostitution putting women's rights, the protection against violence and gender equality at its heart. The report calls for the decriminalisation of people in prostitution and for more support services for those who want to leave it. It is crucial to drastically reduce the demand side, by targeting sex buyers and those benefiting from the prostitution of others. Only a small minority engages in prostitution of their own free will; most of the women in prostitution find themselves there due to a lack of alternatives and would leave it if they could. Our main aim should be to end the system of violence and exploitation that women are drawn into. I therefore urge all MEPs to support my report. The EU must act to stop the trade with women's bodies and invest in building a gender equal society as well as protecting the most vulnerable people in our society.

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DEBATE ON MONDAY, 11 SEPTEMBER; VOTE ON TUESDAY, 12 SEPTEMBER

Geographical indication protection for craft and industrial products

Iban García del Blanco - S&D Shadow rapporteur

While agricultural products have been protected by an EU 'geographical indication' for decades, S&Ds has long been calling for the extension of 'geographical indication' protection to include craft and industrial products. With the upcoming plenary vote, this will become a reality and will make sure that products such as the Albacete knife, Murano glass or porcelain de Limoges will be protected within the EU and globally. Furthermore, consumers will have the guarantee that they will be acquiring authentic products. With this new regulation, we aim to foster the economic dynamism of our regions, to fight counterfeiting and to preserve and promote quality jobs, as well as the expertise of local producers and to settle and attract population.

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S&D Group press conference
Iratxe García Pérez, S&D president
Tuesday, 12 September, 10:00 - 10:20
Daphne Caruana Galizia room - Strasbourg
Weiss N-1/201
Webstreaming here
<https://www.socialistsanddemocrats.eu/>

Journalists who want to participate and ask questions can connect via this link

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