



Group of the Progressive Alliance of Socialists & Democrats in the European Parliament

PRESS CONFERENCE with Hannes Swoboda
Tuesday 2 July at 10.10 LOW N-1/201

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Hannes Swoboda

Conclusions of the European Council meeting (27-28 June 2013)

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Tuesday 2 July 2013

Youth unemployment has reached more than 60% in several member states. We can no longer wait to take action. The proposal on the EU budget for 2014-2020 is not ideal but there are decisive improvements. The agreement allows for the appropriate flexibility, to frontload substantial funds in the first two years, and to backload additional funds through increased flexibility. In these difficult times, we need an EU budget focused on growth and job creation.



Anni Podimata

Implementing enhanced co-operation in the area of financial transaction tax / Rapporteur

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Tuesday 2 July 2013

The S&D Group has been leading the campaign for a financial transaction tax (FTT) from the very beginning. Despite intense lobbying from the financial sector, we managed to defend an ambitious proposal at the committee stage and have consistently defended a tax with a wide scope, covering stocks, bonds and derivatives, and addressing specific concerns. At the Parliament's plenary session in July we must confirm this position and send a strong message to the Council that there are no excuses for delaying the implementation of the financial transaction tax. We want an FTT in place before the European elections in May 2014.



Matthias Groote

Timing of auctions of greenhouse gas allowances / Rapporteur

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Wednesday 3 July 2013

The EU's emissions trading system (EU ETS) has created the world's first major carbon market and an EU-wide carbon price – a key tool for reducing the EU's industrial emissions in a cost-effective way. Despite the reduction of emissions since the start of the EU ETS, the system still has serious imbalances. The current economic crisis, combined with an over-allocation of credits in the first two rounds of the ETS and a significant in-flow of external emission reduction credits from the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), have led to a significant surplus of allowances, resulting in a carbon price of around €4/tnCO₂ (compared to the €30/tnCO₂ envisaged when the climate and energy package was adopted). The EU ETS is one of the pillars of our climate policy. 'Back loading' to delay the auctions of some allowances is only a short-term measure which should not be seen as a solution to the current imbalances but rather as an option that ensures the stability of the EU ETS until the necessary long-term structural measures are adopted.



Arlene McCarthy

Reforming the structure of the EU banking sector / Rapporteur

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Tuesday 2 July 2013

Banking must be more resilient against potential financial crises and ensure the risks and costs of banking activities no longer fall on public finances. It is essential that reform of the EU's banking structure delivers a safe, stable and efficient banking system that serves the needs of the real economy and consumers, and provides credit to the economy, in particular to small and medium companies and start-ups.

This own initiative report sets out several core principles which are essential to deliver a change in banking culture: reducing complexity; enhancing competition; limiting the links between risky and commercial activities; improving corporate governance; creating a responsible remuneration system; enabling effective bank resolution and recovery in case of failure; reinforcing bank capital; and providing credit to the real economy.



Gilles Pargneaux

Serious cross-border threats to health / Rapporteur

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Wednesday 3 July 2013

For the rapporteur there are two political messages in the report:

- 1) The decision will allow us to tackle serious cross-border threats to public health and to carry out better risk assessments. It will ensure better European co-ordination by providing a solid legal basis for the Health Security Committee which is responsible for co-ordinating health security efforts at EU level.
- 2) The greatest achievement is the creation of a legal basis for co-ordinating the purchase of vaccines and medication in Europe, making access to these drugs fairer and more affordable. This is a welcome step forward, especially for smaller member states, which are unable to pay the exorbitant prices charged in recent pandemics. The EU will be able to produce vaccines itself, which should in time lead to quicker vaccinations in urgent situations.



Bernd Lange

Member states' export credit agencies / Shadow rapporteur

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Monday 1 July 2013

In 2011, the European Parliament and Council agreed to transpose the 2005 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) arrangement on export credit activities into EU law. It was agreed to grant a delegated act to the Commission to allow future versions of the OECD arrangements to be transposed in exchange for increased transparency in the export credit activities of member states at EU level. The first annex of the resulting Regulation 1233/2011 contains details of the requirements for annual reporting by the member states to the European Commission. One of the most essential points member states have to report on is how the activities of the export credit agencies comply with the EU's external action objectives, as set out in Articles 3 and 21 of the Treaty of the European Union.

This own-initiative report is a reaction to the first official reporting exercise by the member states for 2011. It contains a set of recommendations for future reporting, particularly in terms of compliance with the EU's external action objectives.



Olga Sehnalova

Inspection of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles / Rapporteur

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Monday 1 July 2013

The proposal on technical roadside inspections of the roadworthiness of commercial vehicles is important to achieve the crucial target of reducing road fatalities by 50% by 2020 and improving environmental protection in the EU. The proposal adopted in the transport committee sets out a more harmonised system of technical roadside inspections and sets a minimum of 5% of technical roadside inspections of registered heavy commercial vehicles to be carried out by member states every year. It introduces a risk rating system for selecting commercial vehicles to be inspected in a gradual manner at EU level, based on national electronic registers connected across the EU and the European Register of Road Transport Undertakings (ERRU). Although light commercial vehicles (N1 category) have been used more frequently for commercial purposes in the last decade, these vehicles were taken out of the scope during the vote in the committee. However, the S&D rapporteur will reintroduce them to encourage member states to also check this category of commercial vehicles during technical roadside inspections. Nevertheless, the EEAS could still do much better. Stronger political leadership from the top, simpler structures and improved co-ordination are needed. Political accountability to the European Parliament should be developed further: the new heads of delegations across the world should attend confirmation hearings before the relevant parliamentary committees before they take up their duties; key European Parliament office holders should receive full political reporting from delegations; and systematic exchanges with the relevant committees need to be put in place ahead of each foreign affairs council.



Vital Moreira

Opening of negotiations on a plurilateral agreement on services / Rapporteur

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Wednesday 3 July 2013

Services should be at the forefront of our trade agenda as the EU is the primary provider of services worldwide and the world economy relies heavily on services to grow. The resolution supports the negotiations for a plurilateral agreement on services (TISA) which should provide a possible pathway to future multi-lateralisation. The text urges the Commission to promote the EU's offensive interests as well as to defend important sensitivities. The members of the Parliament's international trade committee consider that the EU should not include audiovisual and cultural services in these negotiations.



Antonio Fernando Correia De Campos

Completing the digital single market / Shadow rapporteur

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Thursday 4 July 2013

We welcome the fact that the motion for a resolution on completing the digital single market now reflects crucial themes such as the need for a holistic approach and the need to protect and strengthen the rights of consumers and boost their confidence in this market. We are also pleased with the focus on cloud computing – with its potential for competitiveness, job creation and consumer access to information (especially for those with reduced mobility) – and on the need to adopt clear and transparent model contracts specifically covering data integrity issues. Also noteworthy is the emphasis on ensuring net neutrality to allow European SMEs full market access in the ICT sector and the call for a new wave of legislation to further reduce mobile roaming charges within the EU.

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