

# Plenary sessions

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## Newsletter

### 16-19 September 2024

### Strasbourg plenary session

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<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2024-09-16>

## Newsletter - 16-19 September 2024 - Strasbourg plenary session

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## Mario Draghi to outline his competitiveness blueprint to MEPs

**On Tuesday at 13.30, MEPs will hear from Mario Draghi, who has just presented a comprehensive and ambitious blueprint for boosting Europe's competitiveness.**

Parliament will debate the findings after his address from 14.00.

Mr Draghi, formerly the President of the European Central Bank and Prime Minister of Italy, was tasked by Commission President Ursula von der Leyen with presenting ideas on the future of European competitiveness.

The report calls the challenge facing policy makers an “existential” one and warns that procrastination will lead to hard choices having to be made. It proposes far-reaching changes to numerous areas such as an “unprecedented” boost to public investment, including through the issuance of new EU common debt, a reform of the EU's cohesion policy, an overhaul of competition policy, and a new industrial policy with at its core a strategy for reducing Europe's high energy prices.

*Debate: Tuesday, 17 September, from 13.30*

*Procedure: Address and European Parliament statement*

### Further information

[Mario Draghi's report on boosting Europe's competitiveness](#)  
[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

# Parliament to call for more EU cash and weapons for Ukraine

**On Thursday, MEPs are expected, in a resolution, to urge EU countries to continue to provide military and financial support for Kyiv.**

Ahead of the vote on the resolution, plenary will hold a debate with the Commission on Tuesday morning.

In July, the newly-elected European Parliament adopted its first resolution on Ukraine of the tenth parliamentary term, with MEPs stating that the European Union must continue to [support Ukraine for as long as it takes, until victory](#) in the war against Russia's occupying forces.

*Debate: Tuesday 17 September*

*Vote: Thursday 19 September*

*Procedure: Commission statement, non-legislative resolution*

### Further information

[Non-exhaustive list of Ukraine resolutions adopted by MEPs during the previous legislative term \(2019-2024\)](#)

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)

# Parliament to debate the latest developments in Gaza and Middle East

## MEPs will discuss the war in the Gaza Strip and the situation in the Middle East with the Commission on Tuesday afternoon.

Calling for a European common approach, EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell recently described the situation in Gaza as “catastrophic both from a humanitarian and political point of view with no positive outlook in sight”. According to the Gaza Health Ministry, the Israeli forces have killed more than 40 000 Palestinians since October 2023, in response to the attack by Hamas against Israel, in which some 1 200 people were killed and around 250 people abducted.

The European Parliament has repeatedly called for an [immediate and permanent ceasefire](#) and the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages. MEPs have voiced deep concern about the risk of escalation in the conflict, in particular in Lebanon.

*Debate: Tuesday, 17 September*

*Procedure: Commission statement, without resolution*

### Further information

[League of Arab States: Opening remarks by High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell at the Ministerial Meeting, 10.09.2024](#)

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)

# Hungarian residence permits: security concerns over screening Russian nationals

**On Wednesday, MEPs will discuss the Hungarian National Card residence permit scheme and its consequences for the Schengen area with the Commission and Council.**

In July, the Hungarian government extended its [National Card](#) residence permit scheme to include nationals of Russia and Belarus. MEPs [have raised concerns](#) that this would relax screening requirements for Russians and Belarusians entering the EU, creating possible security risks for the entire Schengen free-travel area.

On 4 September, Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson [confirmed](#) before [Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs](#) that the Commission is asking the Hungarian government for further clarifications.

*Debate: Wednesday 18 September*

*Procedure: Council and Commission statements, without resolution*

## Further information

[European Commission guidelines on general visa issuance in relation to Russian applicants](#)  
[Multimedia Centre: Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs](#)

# EU budget 2025: Council's position “fosters incomprehension”

**In a debate on Wednesday on Council's position on next year's EU budget, MEPs are set to criticise planned cuts to EU funding in 2025.**

In his recent [working document](#) on the [Council's position](#) on next year's EU budget, rapporteur [Victor Negrescu](#) (S&D, RO) criticises the Council for cutting EUR 1.52 billion from the Commission's draft budget. “Every year, Council uses a similar justification for cutting programme envelopes, or for curbing programmed reinforcements, even though the procedural and budgetary circumstances and the social, economic and geopolitical context have changed considerably”, Negrescu states, adding that this approach “fosters incomprehension”.

Parliament's priorities for the 2025 EU budget, the first annual budget after the [revision of the Multiannual Financial Framework](#), include more support for the green and digital transitions, competitiveness, and ensuring prosperity, inclusiveness and security, as outlined in its [guidelines adopted in March](#).

### Background

On 19 June, the [Commission presented the draft budget for 2025](#). In October, Parliament will set out its own detailed position for the budgetary negotiations taking place in November. The budget for 2025 has to be agreed between the Council of the EU and the Parliament by the end of this year.

*Debate: Wednesday 18 September*

*Procedure: Presentation by the Council, followed by debate*

### Further information

[Steps of the procedure](#)

[Webpage on the 2025 budgetary procedure](#)

[Factsheet: the budgetary procedure](#)



# Venezuela: MEPs to assess the situation and the EU's response

**With presidential candidate Edmundo González having fled the country, plenary will discuss the situation in Venezuela on Tuesday and vote on a resolution on Thursday.**

In the aftermath of the Venezuelan regime cracking down on the opposition, Parliament will debate the latest developments. The country's authorities claim that President Nicolás Maduro won the 28 July presidential elections, but have failed to release the official ballot data.

Since the elections, more than 2 000 protesters and political dissidents have been arrested on terrorism charges. Last week opposition presidential candidate Edmundo González -the apparent winner of the elections according to publicly available copies of the electoral records- fled the country to seek political asylum in Spain.

*Debate: Tuesday, 17 September*

*Vote: Thursday, 19 September*

*Procedure: Commission statement, with resolution*

### Further information

[Venezuela: Statement by High Representative Josep Borrell on the latest events \(8.09.2024\)](#)

[Press Release: Venezuela: MEPs condemn attacks on opposition's presidential candidate, 08.02.2024](#)

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)

# Global measures for social media platforms

**On Tuesday morning, MEPs will discuss social media platform regulation and the role of the Digital Services Act in protecting democracy and freedom online.**

The debate with the Commission will focus on the enforcement of the Digital Services Act (DSA), which has applied to all platforms since February 2024. MEPs are likely to inquire about the measures taken by the Commission to date, including the proceedings assessing potential breaches of the DSA by TikTok, Meta, X and AliExpress. In light of recent developments, MEPs may also ask whether Telegram will be subject to stricter scrutiny.

Since the adoption of the DSA, more countries are starting to consider similar proposals and laws to make online platforms accountable for the wellbeing of their users, including UK's [Online Safety Act](#), Canada's [Online Harms Bill](#), Australia's [Online Safety Act](#) and the US' [Kids Online Safety Act](#).

### Background

The EU's [digital rulebook](#) has become a global benchmark for protecting consumers and their fundamental rights online, by setting out clear and proportionate obligations for online companies, like social media. These requirements include countering the spread of illegal content and disinformation, strengthening checks of online market places, increasing the transparency of algorithms, enabling consumers to challenge content moderation decisions, and banning certain misleading practices like ads targeting children.

*Debate: Tuesday 17 September*

*Procedure: Commission statement, no resolution*

### Further information

[Digital Services Act \(Official Journal\)](#)  
[Enforcement framework under the DSA \(Commission\)](#)  
[What is the Digital Services Act? \(Commission\)](#)

# Apple tax ruling: MEPs to debate verdict's implications

**On Thursday morning, MEPs will respond to this week's European Court of Justice judgement which considered Ireland's tax arrangements with Apple as illegal state aid.**

Representatives of the Commission and Council will also give their views on the potential ramifications of the Court's judgement, which obliges Ireland to recoup EUR 13 billion in taxes from Apple. The judgement also annuls an earlier ruling of the General Court which went in the opposite direction. This week's judgement is the final, definitive one.

On the day of the judgement, the Chair of Parliament's tax subcommittee called it "[historic](#)".

*Debate: Thursday, 19 September*

*Procedure: Council and Commission statements, without resolution*

### Further information

[ECJ press release](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

# MEPs to debate State of the Energy Union

**On Tuesday afternoon, MEPs will hear from the Commission on the state of the energy market and the energy outlook ahead of winter.**

On 11 September the European Commission published its [State of the Energy Union 2024 report](#), reviewing Europe's energy landscape in the context of the war in Ukraine and the clean energy transition.

Following Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the collapse of gas deliveries to Europe from Russia, and the deterioration of the energy market situation, the EU introduced several emergency measures: the [urgent topping-up of strategic reserves](#), the [REpowerEU](#) plan, energy-saving measures, and a [temporary mechanism to limit excessive gas prices](#). Lawmakers also adopted a [reform of the European electricity market](#), a [reform of the gas market](#), as well as measures to [facilitate the deployment of renewable energy](#).

*Debate: Tuesday, 17 September*

*Procedure: Statement from the European Commission with debate*

### Further information

[EP research: Energy crisis](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

## Response to security threats, and management of illegal migration and returns

**In the wake of a stabbing attack in Solingen, Germany, on Monday MEPs will discuss how to address the unauthorised movements of third country nationals within the EU.**

The plenary debate with a representative of the Commission follows the German government's announcement that it will reintroduce border controls on all its land borders for an initial six-month period. This [internal security decision](#) is intended to improve the detection of unauthorised attempts by third country nationals to enter Germany.

MEPs are likely to raise the adverse impact of these checks on the Schengen free movement area, as well as [the preparations for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum](#). The Pact, expected to be operational from mid-2026, foresees enhanced security checks for persons arriving to the EU irregularly and accelerated asylum and return procedures at EU borders for persons not entitled to international protection.

*Debate: Monday, 16 September 2024*

*Procedure: Commission statement, no resolution*

### Further information

[Pact on Migration and Asylum](#)

[EU Asylum Agency: Asylum Report 2024](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

## MEPs to discuss persistence of anti-Semitism and other forms of hate in Europe

**In a debate on Monday, MEPs are set to condemn incidents of anti-Semitism and other forms of hate speech and hate crime, and demand action from the Commission.**

With [hate speech and hate crime consistently on the rise in Europe](#), the deteriorating [situation in Israel and Gaza](#) has prompted a surge in islamophobic and anti-Semitic incidents across member states, according to media and civil society reports. The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) recently described anti-Semitism as “[still a reality for many Jewish people in the EU today](#)”, with many feeling unable to live openly Jewish lives.

*Debate: Monday 16 September*

*Procedure: Commission statement, without resolution*

### Further information

[Time to criminalise hate speech and hate crime under EU law \(18.01.2024\)](#)

[EP Research Service briefing - “EU legislation and policies to address racial and ethnic discrimination” \(June 2024\)](#)

[European Commission: Combating antisemitism](#)

[European Commission: Combating hate speech and hate crime](#)

[EU Agency for Fundamental Rights: equality, non-discrimination and racism](#)

[Free photos, video and audio material](#)

# MEPs to discuss EU response to the mpox outbreak

**On Wednesday afternoon, MEPs will debate with the Commission the EU's response to the mpox outbreak and the need for continuous action.**

The World Health Organization (WHO) [declared the mpox outbreak](#) in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the neighbouring region a “public health emergency of international concern” on 14 August 2024. The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) [issued its rapid risk assessment](#) on mpox on 16 August, identifying the overall risk for the general population in Europe as low.

At present, one [antiviral treatment](#) and one [vaccine](#) against mpox are authorised in the EU. The Commission (through its Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority) is [coordinating procurement and donation](#) of vaccine doses to affected countries in Africa.

MEPs are expected to call for a coordinated response from the EU and its member states, aimed at stopping the outbreak in Africa and preventing the spread of the virus in Europe.

### Background

Mpox is a viral disease that is usually transmitted from animals to humans. The disease is caused by the Monkeypox virus (MPXV), which is present in the wildlife in several central- and west-African countries.

*Procedure: Commission statement, without resolution*

*Debate: Wednesday, 18 September 2024*

### Further information

[Mpox information - European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control \(ECDC\)](#)

[Mpox information - European Medicines Agency \(EMA\)](#)

[Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority \(HERA\)](#)

[Multimedia centre: EU health policy](#)

# MEPs to debate the future of EU agriculture

## Challenges and policy recommendations identified by the Strategic Dialogue on the Future of EU Agriculture will be discussed by MEPs on Monday.

The [Strategic Dialogue](#) was announced by Commission President von der Leyen in her State of the Union address in September 2023 and launched in January 2024. It brought together 29 major stakeholders from the European agri-food sectors, civil society, rural communities and academia to reach a common understanding and vision for the future of the EU's farming and food systems.

The final report produced by the Strategic Dialogue [was presented](#) on 4 September. President von der Leyen has announced that recommendations from the report will feed into a roadmap for agriculture, which will be presented in the first 100 days of the Commission's new mandate.

In a separate debate on Thursday morning, MEPs will also discuss how droughts and extreme weather events threaten local communities and EU agriculture.

*Debate: Monday 16 September - Strategic Dialogue, Thursday 19 September - droughts*

*Procedure: Commission statements, no resolutions*

### Further information

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)



## Resolutions on human rights and democracy

**Parliament will hold urgent debates on the following human rights, democracy and rule of law topics on Wednesday afternoon, followed by votes on Thursday.**

- The deteriorating situation of women in Afghanistan due to the recent adoption of the law on the “Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice”;
- The severe situation of political prisoners in Belarus;
- The case of José Daniel Ferrer García in Cuba.

*Debate: Wednesday 18 September*

*Vote: Thursday 19 September*

*Procedure: non-legislative resolutions*

### **Further information**

[EP Multimedia Centre: free photos, video and audio material](#)

# Other topics on the agenda

## Other topics on the agenda

- Organised crime, a major threat to the internal security of the European Union and European citizens, topical debate, Wednesday;
- Numerical strength of interparliamentary delegations, vote, Wednesday;
- Commission statement - Outcome of G20 ministerial meeting in Rio-de-Janeiro and fighting inequality, Tuesday;
- Commission statement - Possible extradition of Paul Watson: the danger of criminalisation of environmental defenders and whistle-blowers, and the need for their protection in the EU, Thursday.