



DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

Review of the Spanish Presidency of the Council of the EU*Iratxe García Pérez – President of the S&D Group*

The Spanish Presidency of the Council, under the leadership of Pedro Sánchez, has brought the progressive and pro-European impulse that the Union needs. Among other achievements, we have got the EU to start reforming the electricity market – to be prepared for possible price crises, to accelerate decarbonisation and to protect consumers. Relations with Latin America were also a success under this Presidency, with the first EU-CELAC summit in almost a decade, as well as major advances in the Nature Restoration Regulation. We are confident that the Belgian Presidency will continue our legacy and advance in those areas led by the Socialists and Democrats, such as the fight against gender violence, the review of fiscal rules and migration policies.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 DECEMBER

It is high time to fight for just and sustainable peace and a two-state solution for Israel and Palestine*Iratxe García Pérez – President of the S&D Group*

There have now been two months of war since the horrific and barbaric cruelty of the attacks by Hamas terrorists against Israeli citizens. The decision of UN Secretary General Guterres to invoke Article 99 of the United Nations Charter is a testament to the gravity and urgency of the situation on the ground. The UN Security Council and the international community at large cannot ignore the unbearable suffering of Palestinian civilians in Gaza and must take immediate action to put an end to this human tragedy, humanitarian catastrophe and physical destruction. All hostages must be immediately and unconditionally released, a humanitarian ceasefire must be established without delay and settler violence in the occupied West Bank must stop. Eight weeks into Israel's military operation, over 17,000 Palestinians have been killed including thousands of women and children. It is imperative that the Netanyahu government and the Israeli military respect International Law and International Humanitarian Law. The protection of civilians in every war is a legal obligation and there is no justification for the massive civilian casualties, the humanitarian harm, the displacement of 1.9 million and the reduction of entire parts of Gaza to rubble. There is no military solution to this conflict. It is high time to fight for just and sustainable peace and two states with the EU taking a leading role in supporting these efforts.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

EU strategy to assist young people facing the housing and cost of living crisis*Pedro Marques – vice-president of the S&D Group*

The cost of living remains a top concern for European citizens, as demonstrated in the most recent Eurobarometer. For the S&Ds, the social dimension of the European Union is a political priority, where we want to continue delivering results. It is essential to build a fair society and restore the hope of younger generations in a prosperous future with opportunities. From tackling the housing crisis to banning unpaid internships, our commitment is to make Europe part of the solution.

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DEBATE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

Preparation of the European Council meeting of 14-15 December, 2023*Pedro Marques – vice-president of the S&D Group*

Standing united against the brutality of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and helping Ukraine is more crucial than ever, as Kyiv's armed forces are fighting to make gains against invading Russian troops. It is unacceptable that Hungary's prime minister Viktor Orbán is threatening to block all European Union aid for Ukraine, as well as the EU summit's historic decision to start membership talks with Ukraine. But it is also unacceptable that in an attempt to win Budapest's approval, the European Commission is considering unlocking billions of euros for Hungary that were frozen over rule-of-law concerns. We must never trade our values for money! If we give in to Orbán now, he will continue to blackmail us. The European Council must not allow a country with close ties to Vladimir Putin to dictate EU foreign policy. This once again highlights the necessity of eliminating the unanimity rule in EU decision-making in foreign affairs, a position long-advocated by the S&D Group.

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DEBATE ON MONDAY, 11 DECEMBER, VOTE ON TUESDAY, 12 DECEMBER

The European elections 2024

Domènec Ruiz Devesa – S&D spokesperson on constitutional affairs and rapporteur on the European elections 2024

Before the European elections in 2024, it is essential that MEPs agree on a clear position on how to strengthen the European public sphere. With this report, we have paved the way for recommendations to the European political parties, to strengthen the European dimension of electoral campaign ahead of the 2024 elections. We need to make the European political parties' logos and their public messages more visible. We would also like to see concrete post-electoral procedures to increase the visibility of the role played by the European political parties for the election of the Commission President and strengthen the electoral rights of all European citizens. It is crucial to send a clear signal to European citizens that there is a direct link between their vote and the implementation of new EU-wide policies.

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DEBATE ON TUESDAY, 12 DECEMBER, VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

EU-US relations

Tonino Picula – S&D spokesperson on foreign affairs and negotiator of the European Parliament on the topic in the EP's committee on foreign affairs

As 2024 will see key elections on both sides of the Atlantic, the European Parliament will adopt its new position on transatlantic relations, calling on the EU to work towards an even stronger partnership with the US – in light of the multiple threats and crises confronting both sides of the Atlantic. It is essential that we continue strong transatlantic cooperation to defend multilateralism and tackle the dangerous geopolitical realities that affect our common values, interests, security and prosperity. In particular, both sides must reinforce the resilience of their democratic systems, to resist both external and internal threats, like increased disinformation and foreign interference from authoritarian regimes in electoral processes. Standing together against Russia's war of aggression and helping Ukraine will be even more crucial in the months to come, and must remain our common commitment. However, it is evident that the EU needs some contingency planning from our side, despite the good shape of our relations with the US Biden administration.

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VOTE ON TUESDAY, 12 DECEMBER

Addictive design of online services and consumer protection in the EU single market

Alex Saliba, S&D MEP and shadow rapporteur on addictive design of online services and consumer protection in the EU single market

Digital addictions are hugely damaging! Online services, games, social media, streaming sites and online marketplaces are designed to keep us hooked on scrolling. The EU Parliament is calling for new laws to protect us; forcing platforms to develop ethical and fair digital products and services. Some of the things we are pushing for will have immediate benefits, like turning off all notifications by default, an easy choice between colour and greyscale and warnings when users spend too long looking at the screen. We need to act now to help people break this cycle.

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VOTE ON WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER

Jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition of decisions and acceptance of authentic instruments in matters of parenthood and creation of a European Certificate of Parenthood

Maria-Manuel Leitão-Marques, S&D MEP and rapporteur on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition of decisions and acceptance of authentic instruments in matters of parenthood and creation of a European Certificate of Parenthood

If you are a parent in one member state, you are a parent in all member states. Currently, the same family in different member states might be subject to different laws to determine the parenthood of a child. This means that children may lose their parents – legally speaking – when they enter another country. We want to make sure that all children have the same rights in the EU! This includes the right to maintenance and succession, or schooling and education in another member state. With this regulation we want to strengthen the rights of all children without discrimination and ensure that they all enjoy their rights and maintain their legal status in cross-border situations irrespective of their family situation.

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S&D Group press conference
Iratxe García Pérez, S&D president
Tuesday, 12 December, 10:00 - 10:30
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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