



WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY

Preparation of the Extraordinary European Council Meeting of 20 February 2020 on the Multiannual Financial Framework

The EU has established new priorities that must be accompanied by fresh money. We cannot do more with less, and we will not allow any cuts to important policies such as cohesion or agriculture. On 20th February, member states will have the chance to prove if they are ready to do more than just talk the talk and match the ambitious agenda for Europe's future with the financial resources needed.



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TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY

Proposed mandate for negotiations for a new partnership with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

In the European Parliament we are ready to look ahead to a new partnership with the UK. The S&D Group will vote next week to make sure that in this future relationship, we can guarantee our shared high standards of environmental, social and labour protection with binding commitments to a level playing field. As we enter a new phase of negotiations, we will continue to take a constructive approach that serves our common interests and safeguards the integrity of the single market, the customs union and the four freedoms.



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TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY

Conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement between the European Union and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

For Social Democrats trade can never be an end in itself, but must be a tool to make people's lives better. During the negotiation of the EU-Vietnam trade deal, the S&D Group exerted its leverage and set in motion positive change that will improve the situation of millions of workers in Vietnam and give the EU a stronger voice in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. At the beginning of our work, Vietnam still had not signed three core ILO Conventions and a long anticipated reform of the labour code was in deadlock. Due to efforts from the S&D Group, the government has since ratified the convention on collective bargaining, passed a fundamental labour reform and committed to a concrete roadmap, inter alia for the ratification and implementation of the two outstanding conventions on forced labour and freedom of association. We will continue to monitor and scrutinise implementation closely, especially of commitments on labour and human rights, and push for positive change in Vietnam.



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WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY


A social Europe in a digital world


The S&D Group puts strong emphasis on the social dimension of the digital transformation – we want to tackle precarious forms of work and atypical and non-standard forms of employment. The European Digital Agenda must have a social dimension! We must stop surveillance capitalism. We ask for the right to disconnect and we want to have a strong role of social partners. There has to be a progressive just transition. Nobody must be left behind. Employment needs to undergo a transformation in order to stop the explosion of inequality. We need to invest into digital skills and literacy, in particular to STEAM education programmes - Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics. We need to improve young people's media competence, and invest into the digital literacy for adults and life-long learning. We need more investments to R&D, science and the scientific community. This topical debate in Plenary, requested by our Group, aims to point out the influence all technological developments will have on our lives and how we aim to tackle them, keeping in mind the social aspect.



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MONDAY 10 FEBRUARY


Commission statement - Assessment of the revised enlargement methodology proposal of the European Commission


The S&Ds have always insisted that enlargement towards the Western Balkans is a win-win approach and an investment in peace, democracy and prosperity in our continent. If we want our Union to be geopolitical, then it is clear that we have to concentrate first and foremost in our closest neighbourhood. That is why we are happy that the European Commission is trying to resolve the deadlock in the Council on EU enlargement through a concrete proposal as demanded by the more sceptical member states. We welcome the fact that the new methodology of the accession negotiation put particular focus on the rule of law throughout the entire process. I do hope this new methodology will inject new dynamism and that we shall regain the credibility that we have lost in the region with the recent non-decision of the Council on enlargement. The first step should be to finally open accession negotiations with Albania and North Macedonia as soon as possible and hopefully already in March.



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S&D Group president's press conference: Tuesday 11 February at 10:10 CET in Strasbourg, room LOW N-1/201

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