



22-25 OCTOBER 2018

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

More Info: David Lundy +32 485 505 82, Ben Leung +32 470 809 65, Nikki Sullings +32 483 03 55 75 or Ziyad Lunat +32 499 632 314

www.guengl.eu

PRESS BRIEFING

Tuesday 23 October
@ 11.30
EP Press Room LOW
N-1/201

GUE/NGL PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question our MEPs on issues they are covering.

The main topics will be the EU Council Meeting, the drinking water directive, single use plastics and COP 24/COP 14.

The speakers will be GUE/NGL President Gabi Zimmer and Irish MEP Lynn Boylan

Interpretation: EN, FR, DE, ES, IT and PL.



Gabi Zimmer - EU Council meeting

Debate: Wednesday

After another wasted EU summit in which Theresa May yet again failed to lay out the UK's position on the Irish backstop, the EU negotiators need to wise up to the fact that they may have fallen for the oldest trick in the book. With Brexit now just five months away and everybody still in the dark over what the UK intends to do in order to protect The Good Friday Agreement, the UK is clearly stalling for time in the hope of last-minute concessions.

This is not a game - this affects the lives of millions across our continent. With no acceptable proposals from the British, GUE/NGL reaffirms its position that there shall be no Withdrawal Agreement without a concrete solution on the border in Ireland which will protect The Good Friday Agreement in all its parts. Whether or not there is a Withdrawal Agreement, we must be ready to take every possible measure to ensure that the lives and the rights of these citizens will be protected.



Eleonora Forenza - Rise of neo-fascist violence

Vote: Thursday

We must stop neo-fascist violence in Europe. We must ban neo-fascist groups and reiterate that the European project is anti-fascist. We must defeat the sexist and racist cultures that have given rise to fascism - both old and new - which, sadly, have become the norm again in many member state governments.



Cornelia Ernst - Facebook and Cambridge Analytica

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Thursday

Facebook hasn't changed a thing since the Cambridge Analytica scandal. Its representatives keep regurgitating the same story that data leaks were 'unfortunate' and it's someone else's fault, and that Facebook hasn't breached any laws... Excuses, excuses! Their whole business is based on what they know about their users and it's that knowledge that they make money from. There won't be any transparency for online electoral campaigning. We must stop feeding this toxic business: I urge all political parties to refrain from using targeted advertising in electoral campaigning.





Marie-Christine Vergiat - Schengen Information System II

Debate: Tuesday, Vote: Wednesday

SIS II is conflating security, border control and immigration and this is helping to aggravate the 'criminalisation' of so-called irregular immigration. It also calls into question fundamental rights such as the presumption of innocence. GUE/NGL believes the security of Europeans can and should be guaranteed in accordance with the fundamental principles of our democracies. But SIS II is too excessive.



Lynn Boylan - Drinking water quality

Debate: Monday, Vote: Tuesday

The Drinking Water Directive is supposed to be the Commission's response to the European Citizen's Initiative, Right2Water, which made important demands on access to water. What we have ended up with is a Parliament position that does an injustice to this citizen's petition. GUE/NGL are making efforts to enshrine the right to water with solid obligations on member states.

Lynn Boylan - Single-use plastics

Debate: Monday, Vote: Wednesday

This new Directive will see certain everyday single-use plastic products finally regulated in some shape or form - with bans, consumption reduction targets, marking requirements and extended producer responsibility among other measures. Unfortunately, the devil is in the details, with the Parliament's report containing a restrictive definition of 'single-use plastic', which GUE/NGL will be amending to allow for greater ambition.

Lynn Boylan - COP24 and COP14

Debate: Monday, Vote: Thursday

Last week, the shocking truth of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's report on global warming came to public attention, meaning the upcoming COP24 will be crucial in ensuring we are on the right trajectory. The hard truth, however, is that the Nationally Determined Contributions simply do not add up. The EU collectively must fill the current leadership gap.



Kostadinka Kuneva - Employment and social policies in Euro area

Debate: Monday, Vote: Thursday

For the first time, we all agreed that the EU's social goals and commitments would be treated on an equal-footing as its economic priorities. Likewise, the EU Social Pillar will be implemented in a more binding way through legislation, policy making and financial instruments. However, the Rapporteur did not accept GUE/NGL's proposals for establishing the 'European Unemployment Reinsurance Scheme', or the respect for collective bargaining and the protection of social and health policies from measures imposed by fiscal consolidation programmes. That is a shame.



Anja Hazekamp – Animal welfare and AMR vote

Vote: Thursday

For so long now, chickens have been in dire need for more protection. Yet, the European Commission hasn't done a thing. Tens of thousands of chickens are still being locked up in bare barns and will most likely never see daylight. Within a lifespan of less than six weeks, tiny little broilers are being plumped into chickens weighing 2 kilos! The EU really must prohibit both rearing and importing these inflated 'pop chickens'!



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