



14-17 DECEMBER 2020

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

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**ONLINE  
PRESS BRIEFING**

European Parliament  
Anna Polykovskaya,  
PHS 0A50  
**TUE 15 DEC**  
**10:30 CET**

## PRESS BRIEFING

Journalists are welcome to question the Co-presidents of The Left in the European Parliament on issues they are covering. Physical & remote participation possible.

**Manon Aubry** (France Insoumise, France)

**Martin Schirdewan** (Die Linke, Germany)



## Martin Schirdewan – Brexit and the MFF

**Debate: Wednesday**

Boris Johnson came, ate and then disappeared. A deal is becoming increasingly unlikely. The differences remain and the clock is ticking. 'No deal' has long been the more likely scenario.

Whatever happens, the European Parliament must have enough time to scrutinise any agreement; provisional 'application' is unacceptable.

The Left group could only agree to a deal if labour and environmental standards can be safeguarded today and in the future, and if dumping competitions are ruled out. These important points must not be watered down in the small print of the agreement.

Meanwhile for the MFF, the German presidency of the Council has once again caved in to Viktor Orbán. This compromise on the rule of law, which is now on the table, will allow Hungary and Poland to keep interfering in their judiciary and the media, and at the same, pursue more authoritarianism and violations of disadvantaged minority group's fundamental rights. Autocrats like Orbán have nothing to fear from the Rule of Law mechanism in the future.

The good news is that we can finally distribute much-needed funds for Europe. Unfortunately, the price we have to pay has now been permanently stained by member states' disregard for democracy and rule of law.



## Manon Aubry – A declaration of 'Social Emergency'

**Debate: Wednesday**

Since the start of the pandemic, millions of Europeans have lost their jobs, with a worsening social crisis and rising poverty in all member states. The European Union declared a climate and environmental emergency a year ago as a last-chance reminder on the necessity to respond to the ecological catastrophe. This December plenary session would therefore have been the right time to also declare a 'social emergency' - but our request was rejected by most political groups in the Parliament. This is a huge political mistake: the European Union has to face up to the dramatic rise in both inequalities and poverty!





## Cornelia Ernst – The Dublin III Regulation for asylum application

**Debate: Monday Vote: from Tuesday**

The Dublin system is at the core of the EU's inhumane asylum policies. This report looks at the shortcomings of its implementation by member states, and it includes many salient points. However, the real issue with the Dublin system is not its implementation; rather, it is with the rules that the Regulation sets out. The key to fixing the shortcomings of Dublin is in the relocation of asylum seekers from day one.



## Idoia Villanueva Ruiz – The Drinking Water Directive

**Debate & vote: Tuesday**

The Drinking Water Directive may have introduced important updates and changes to the legislation in ensuring safe drinking water. However, by failing to safeguard citizens' access and right to water - which is a global public good - it offers no obligations to uphold the European Citizens' Initiative Right2Water petition. Is this really how the EU wants to respond to the almost 2 million signatories to the petition?



## Martina Michels – REACT-EU pandemic fund for EU regions

**Debate & Vote: Tuesday**

People and regions which have been the worst-affected by the Covid-19 crisis can now hopefully get quick and flexible money from the EU. With the REACT-EU fund, member states will also be able to tackle the social crisis caused by the pandemic. Although we deplore the EU Council for cutting this fund before negotiations had even started - more money is needed to address social inequality and unemployment - for the first time, there will be fresh money for our regions. That said, everything still depends on what happens with the MFF.

