



18-21 JANUARY 2021

PLENARY SESSION PRIORITIES

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**ONLINE
PRESS BRIEFING**

European Parliament
Anna Polykovskaya,
PHS 0A50
**TUE 19 JAN
11:15 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)



Manon Aubry – Social & Employment crisis during Covid-19 and the EU's vaccine strategy

Vaccines debate: Tuesday, Social crisis debate: Wednesday

Europe is facing an unprecedented crisis, with millions of citizens at risk of falling into poverty. The Left is calling on the Portuguese EU Presidency and the European Parliament to immediately declare a state of social emergency. We need urgent action to help our youth, the unemployed, precarious workers and low-income families. Billions have been given away without any constraint to big corporations in the past few months: citizens need our support - not markets and shareholders.

On the contracts for procuring the Covid-19 vaccines, transparency is not optional: it is a fundamental right. Every MEP must be allowed to read the contracts for all vaccines, whenever they want and without censorship. Commission President Von der Leyen cannot negotiate the contract terms on her own and refuse any accountability! Elected members of the European Parliament need to have access to all relevant information in order to evaluate the Commission's choices. This is the only way to restore trust and to respond to the legitimate concerns of European citizens.



Martin Schirdewan – The attempted coup in the US

Debate: Wednesday

A new fascist movement has appeared in the United States. Heavily armed and bound by their hatred for democracy, their attempted coup came on the same day as the presidential election results were certified. But this was only made possible by tacit, Trump-led conservative allies who are tilted to the far-right – whether by calculation or even as an option for political power in the future. Here in Europe, we are seeing similar developments. Anyone who wants to prevent a repeat of the storming of the US Capitol, or indeed the German Reichstag late last year, must follow a basic consensus that is both clearly democratic and anti-fascist. The Left in the European Parliament is and will remain steadfastly antifascist.





Malin Björk - Humanitarian situation of refugees and migrants at the EU's external borders

Debate: Tuesday

The humanitarian situation and the illegal pushbacks at the EU's external borders are totally unacceptable: shame on Europe. Despite tonnes of evidence of the violations, there's been complete impunity and zero consequences for the perpetrators. We therefore demand independent investigations into Frontex and the national border police forces that are involved in the pushbacks. The current crisis in Bosnia must not be repeated. It is our duty to implement a proper, functioning reception system for those seeking refuge in the EU. We must stop outsourcing this to countries outside the EU.



Marisa Matias - Portugal's EU Presidency

Debate: Wednesday morning

The Portuguese Presidency should have more of an identity. I would like to see more robust standards against wage and tax dumping, and this means a more ambitious agenda. We also need to deliver on the commitments made on climate goals, and do away with insufficient and contradictory policies that we have become so used to.



João Ferreira - Portugal's EU Presidency

Debate: Wednesday morning

The Portuguese presidency is taking place at a time when the social and economic situation demand real change in policies that can truly tackle growing social problems and inequalities, disparities between countries, and the economic crisis. Another path is required for real cohesion, for defending democracy and for raising the living conditions of workers, wages and their rights.



Sandra Pereira - The EU's Gender Equality Strategy

Debate and vote: Thursday

It is by exercising women's rights that the improvement of living and working conditions, equal participation in all areas of society - namely in maternity and paternity - that we change people's mentality on gender equality. Tackling inequalities requires an end to unregulated working hours, job insecurity, low wages, indiscriminate dismissals and disinvestment in public services. It also demands an end to all violence against women.



María Eugenia Rodríguez Palop - The EU's Gender Equality Strategy

Debate and vote: Thursday

There are two major challenges facing the EU's Strategy for Gender Equality: its implementation and how to put its proposals into effect as quickly as possible - the pandemic should not be an excuse for delays - and also how to prevent the far-right and the 'gender ideology' discourse from preventing its adoption and application. The EU Commission needs to be ambitious and take on board our recommendations, including a Care Deal for Europe and a far-reaching pay transparency directive.