



SPOTLIGHT

European Parliament

Coming Week Highlights

Committee and political group meetings, Brussels

President's diary. EP President Roberta Metsola will deliver the opening address at the European Parliament's Article 17 dialogue (with churches, religious associations or communities, and philosophical and non-confessional organisations) on the humanitarian response to the war in Ukraine, on Tuesday.

Fit for 55: Negotiations are scheduled to start with the Czech Council Presidency on the EU Emissions Trading System (ETS) and the Carbon border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), after Parliament and member states agreed on their respective positions in June (Monday).

Protection of consumer credit. The Internal Market and Consumer Protection Committee will vote to update EU online rules protecting consumers from over-indebtedness, e.g. as a result of loans, overdrafts and credit cards (Tuesday).

Global deforestation. The Environment Committee will vote on draft legislation to halt EU-driven global deforestation, a key contributor to global warming. The new law will make it obligatory for companies to verify (so-called "due diligence") that goods sold in the EU do not contribute to the destruction of forests outside the EU (Tuesday).

Rights of Ukrainian women fleeing war. MEPs will discuss with national parliamentarians on the rights of Ukrainian women fleeing the war, particularly reception conditions and access to social protection, the labour market, housing, childcare and education (Tuesday).

EU survey on citizens' media views and habits. Parliament will publish a Eurobarometer survey on EU citizens' media habits, their trust in different media sources, and attitudes to the threat of disinformation (Tuesday).

COVID-19. The EP's Special Committee on the COVID-19 pandemic will hold a debate with the director of the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Authority's (HERA) Director-General, and chief epidemiologists from several EU countries (Wednesday).

NATO/Stoltenberg. The Foreign Affairs Committee, the Security and Defence Subcommittee and the Delegation for relations with NATO will discuss EU-NATO cooperation and the outcome of the 28-30 June NATO summit with Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg (Wednesday).

Fit for 55/Renewables and Energy efficiency. The Industry, Research and Energy Committee will adopt its positions on two draft bills that are part of the "Fit for 55" package to fight climate change. MEPs will vote on new EU targets to accelerate the deployment of renewable energy and increase energy efficiency. The measures would also support the EU's energy sovereignty and security in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine (Wednesday).



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Hungary/EU values. The Civil Liberties Committee will adopt a report detailing the Hungarian government's systemic threats to EU values in the country. MEPs are likely to say that member states should have already acted to address this situation and that any further delay would amount to a breach of the rule of law by the Council itself (Wednesday).

Link to all committee meetings [here](#)

European Commission Coming Week Highlights

Link to Commission Press Corner for coming events [here](#)

European Council and Council of the European Union Coming Week Highlights

12 July: [Eurogroup](#) The Eurogroup will discuss Macro-economic developments and policy challenges in the euro area in the current global context, including a discussion of the main findings of the IMF interim staff mission.

11 - 12 July: [Informal meeting of justice and home affairs ministers](#)

12 July: [Economic and Financial Affairs Council](#) The Council is expected to adopt the final three legal acts which will enable Croatia to introduce euro as its currency on 1 January 2023. In the context of the European Semester 2022, the Council is expected to approve conclusions on the 2022 in-depth reviews under the macroeconomic imbalance procedure.

12 -14 July: [Informal meeting of environment ministers.](#)

14 -15 July: [Informal meeting of European affairs ministers](#)

14 July: [EU-Montenegro Stabilisation and Association Council](#)



Highlights of Week 4 to 10 July 2022

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Digital Services

On Tuesday, Parliament held the final vote on the new Digital Services Act (DSA) and Digital Markets Act (DMA), following a deal reached between Parliament and Council on 23 April and 24 March respectively. The two bills aim to address the societal and economic effects of the tech industry by setting clear standards for how they operate and provide services in the EU, in line with the EU's fundamental rights and values.

The Digital Services Act was adopted with 539 votes in favour, 54 votes against and 30 abstentions. The Digital Markets Act - with 588 in favour, 11 votes against and 31 abstentions.

Next steps

Once formally adopted by the Council in July (DMA) and September (DSA), both acts will be published in the EU Official Journal and enter into force twenty days after publication.

The DSA will be directly applicable across the EU and will apply fifteen months or from 1 January 2024 (whichever comes later) after the entry into force. As regards the obligations for very large online platforms and very large online search engines, the DSA will apply earlier - four months after they have been designated as such by the Commission.

The DMA will start to apply six months following its entry into force. The gatekeepers will have a maximum of six months after they have been designated to comply with the new obligations.

Link to EP report [here](#)

MEPs approve Croatia's entry into the eurozone

MEPs on Tuesday gave a favourable opinion to Croatia's bid to become the newest member of the eurozone from the 1st January 2023.

Parliament, by 539 votes in favour, 45 votes against and 48 abstentions, adopted the report of Siegfried Mureşan (EPP, RO) stating Croatia fulfils all the criteria for adopting the euro on 1st January 2023.

The report notes that, despite the evaluation of Croatia's readiness taking place against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, high inflation, and Russia's war against Ukraine, Croatia continues to be ready to adopt the euro.

MEPs also state that Croatia already has a higher level of price convergence with the eurozone compared to other member states on their adoption of the euro. Nonetheless, Parliament expects sustained efforts from the Croatian government to ensure further price convergence and that the introduction of the euro does not lead to artificial price increases.

Next steps

Parliament's opinion will be forwarded to Eurozone member states who are responsible for giving the final clearance for Croatia to adopt the euro.

Link to EPI report [here](#)

Eradicating women's poverty in Europe

In a report adopted on Tuesday with 535 in favour, 18 against and 79 abstentions, MEPs call for gender to be integrated more effectively into policies that address homelessness, the lack of access to affordable and adequate housing, and energy. The Commission must develop an ambitious 2030 European anti-poverty strategy, with concrete targets and a focus on ending women's poverty, they say.

The worsening social and economic situation has increased all forms of abuse and violence towards women, MEPs stress. They urge member states to provide support to women escaping situations of gender-based violence, as a life free from violence is fundamental if women are to participate in the labour market, reach their full potential and have financial independence.

The COVID-19 crisis has shown that women working in the social, care, cleaning, education, health and retail sectors play a pivotal role in keeping our societies functioning, the text says. MEPs call for the use of cross-sector gender-neutral job evaluation tools to assess and more fairly remunerate female-dominated work. Such tools would also ensure equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, while strengthening women's entrepreneurship in small and medium-sized enterprises. Ensuring accessible and high-quality public and private childcare would improve women's opportunities in the labour market.

Link to EP report [here](#)

Protecting mental health in the digital workspace

In a resolution adopted on Tuesday with 501 votes in favour, 47 against and 85 abstentions, Parliament recognises the benefits of working from home, like increased flexibility and autonomy, but warns of the significant health risks stemming from over-connection, a blurring of the lines between work and private life, and higher work intensity or "technostress" – the stress linked to work-related technology use.

MEPs warn about the risks to workers' mental health and the threats to the right to privacy posed by technology-enabled control and surveillance through software and AI tools, remote real-time monitoring of progress and performance and time-tracking. They also point to other factors causing additional stress, including financial insecurity, fear of unemployment, limited access to healthcare, isolation, as well as changes to working hours and inadequate work organisation because of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic crisis.

Additionally, they highlight the impact the shift to teleworking may have on the mental health of those at risk of digital exclusion. They say that the digital divide in the EU needs to be addressed to ensure that all workers have a sufficient level of digital skills.

Link to EP report [here](#)

Kyriakos Mitsotakis:

On Tuesday, the Greek Prime Minister focused on the need to broaden and deepen the EU while addressing MEPs during the fifth "This is Europe" debate.

At the beginning of his speech, Prime Minister Mitsotakis stated that his country suffered more than any other in the past few years, but was ultimately able to overcome the political and economic challenges that almost led to its exit from the euro. Now, in addition to being among the top growing economies in Europe, Greece is on the front line of fighting for the future of the EU - in the EU's response to the pandemic, as well as in protecting the external border from Turkey's instrumentalisation of migrants and its aggression against Greece and Cyprus.

Link to EP report [here](#)

Taxonomy: MEPs do not object to inclusion of gas and nuclear activities

The European Parliament did not object to the Commission's Taxonomy Delegated Act to include specific nuclear and gas energy activities, under certain conditions, in the list of environmentally sustainable



economic activities covered by the so-called EU Taxonomy.

As the Commission believes there is a role for private investment in gas and nuclear activities in the green transition, it has proposed the classification of certain fossil gas and nuclear energy activities as transitional activities contributing to climate change mitigation. The inclusion of certain gas and nuclear activities is time-limited and dependent on specific conditions and transparency requirements.

278 MEPs voted in favour of the resolution, 328 against and 33 abstained. An absolute majority of 353 MEPs was needed for Parliament to veto the Commission's proposal. If neither Parliament, nor Council object to the proposal by 11 July 2022, the Taxonomy Delegated Act will enter into force and apply as of 1 January 2023.

Link to EP report [here](#)

EU fisheries and aquaculture to receive compensation for the war in Ukraine

MEPs adopted on Wednesday a deal with Council on providing EU fisheries and aquaculture sectors with financial support to alleviate the consequences of the war, by 620 votes in favour, 10 against and 9 abstentions.

The measure would support fishers who had to cease their activities due to the war in Ukraine as well as producers and fishing and aquaculture operators whose activities were disrupted as a consequence of the Russian aggression. MEPs also agreed with the Council to amend the proposal to include also those operators and producers whose economic viability was negatively impacted by the war and the processing sector.

Link to EP report [here](#)

MEPs discussed priorities of the Czech Presidency with Prime Minister Fiala

Czech Prime Minister Petr Fiala presented on Wednesday the programme and main goals of the Czech Council Presidency's semester.

Link to EP Report [here](#)

EU Enlargement

On Wednesday, Parliament outlined its assessment of the political situation in three accession countries: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and Serbia.


Link to EP report [here](#)

June summit:

MEPs discussed the conclusions of 23-24 June European Council summit with President Charles Michel and Commission Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič. Almost all speakers welcomed the decision to commence the accession process for Ukraine and Moldova, as Parliament had already asked. Many MEPs underlined that the road to accession is going to be long and will require many reforms for Ukraine and Moldova. They stresses that the EU should find other ways to support the countries in the meantime, including with military equipment, some argued.

Numerous speakers referred to the need to treat Western Balkan countries fairly and unblock their accession, as Parliament has already repeatedly asked in the past. Regarding the Conference on the Future of Europe and Parliament's call for a Convention to revise the EU Treaties, many MEPs criticised the lack of ambition shown by the Council in this regard, highlighting that the need to reform the EU and the way it works is urgent. Citizens must not be let down and their expectations must be fulfilled, they insisted.

Many MEPs pointed to the need for more coordinated action to tackle the interconnected problems of



skyrocketing energy prices, gas shortages caused by the Russian war against Ukraine, rising inflation, and the impact of this on households - with several across political groups asking for a cap on gas prices. Other topics raised were the need to reform the EU's migration and asylum system, accession of more EU countries to the Schengen area, and Turkey's aggression towards its EU neighbours.

Link to EP report [here](#)

Human rights breaches in Hong Kong, Brazil and Tajikistan

On Thursday, the European Parliament adopted three resolutions on the respect for human rights in Hong Kong, Brazil and Tajikistan.

Link to EP report [here](#)

Ukrainians can keep their driving licences in the EU,

On Thursday, MEPs backed a proposal to allow Ukrainian refugees to keep their national driving licences, exempting them from the obligation to exchange them for EU ones. Two weeks after the European Commission presented its proposal, MEPs agreed to simplify the procedure for Ukrainian refugees to keep their driving licences in the EU, with 561 votes to six and five abstentions.

Link to EP Report [here](#)

Fit for 55: Parliament pushes for greener aviation fuels

Parliament adopted its position on new draft EU rules to increase the uptake of sustainable fuels by EU planes and airports, in order to cut emissions from aviation and ensure Europe becomes climate neutral by 2050.

MEPs increased the Commission's original proposal for the minimum share of a sustainable aviation fuel that should be made available at EU airports. From 2025, this share should be 2%, increasing to 37% in 2040 and 85% by 2050, taking into account the potential of electricity and hydrogen in the overall fuel mix (Commission proposed 32% for 2040 and 63% for 2050).

Next steps

The negotiating mandate was adopted by 334 votes to 95 and 153 abstentions. Parliament is now ready to start negotiations with Council

Link to EP report [here](#)

Right to Abortion

The right to abortion should be included in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, MEPs urge in a resolution on the US Supreme Court decision to overturn abortion rights in the United States and the need to safeguard abortion rights and women's health in the EU, adopted with 324 in favour, 155 against and 38 abstentions. A proposal should be submitted to the Council to amend Article 7 of the Charter adding that "everyone has the right to safe and legal abortion." MEPs expect the European Council to meet to discuss a Convention to revise the EU Treaties, as already stated in their resolution on 9 June.

Link to EP report [here](#)



European Commission.

Highlights Week 4 to 10 July 2022.

Commission presents new European Innovation Agenda to spearhead the new innovation wave

On Tuesday, the Commission adopted a New European Innovation Agenda to position Europe at the forefront of the new wave of deep tech innovation and start-ups. It will help Europe to develop new technologies to address the most pressing societal challenges, and to bring them on the market. The New European Innovation Agenda is designed to position Europe as a leading player on the global innovation scene. Europe wants to be the place where the best talent work hand in hand with the best companies and where deep tech innovation thrives and creates breakthrough innovative solutions across the continent that will inspire the world.

Link to Commission statement [here](#)

Vehicle General Safety Regulation

The new Vehicle General Safety Regulation started applying from Wednesday. It introduces a range of mandatory advanced driver assistant systems to improve road safety and establishes the legal framework for the approval of automated and fully driverless vehicles in the EU. The new safety measures will help to better protect passengers, pedestrians and cyclists across the EU, expectedly saving over 25,000 lives and avoid at least 140,000 serious injuries by 2038.

As the coming into force of the General Safety Regulation empowers the Commission to complete the legal framework for automated and connected vehicles, the Commission will deliver this summer technical rules for the approval of fully driverless vehicles, making EU a pioneer in the field. These will help to increase public trust, boost innovation and improve the competitiveness of Europe's car industry.

Link to Commission statement [here](#)

State aid:

The European Commission has proposed a Council Regulation enabling the Commission to exempt from prior notification under EU State aid rules certain types of aid for rail, inland waterway and multimodal transport, with the objective of promoting green transport.

The new Council Regulation, proposed in the context of the revision of the State aid Railway Guidelines, will enable the Commission to declare certain categories of State aid to greener modes of transport compatible with the internal market. These include certain types of aid in favour of rail, inland waterway and multimodal transport, in particular aid supporting the coordination of transport, that have a limited potential of distorting competition.

Following the adoption of the proposed Regulation by Council, the Commission intends to adopt a Block Exemption Regulation relieving Member States from the obligation of prior notification to the Commission of aid measures falling within these categories. This will provide legal certainty, simplify procedures and cut red tape for Member States, while allowing the Commission to focus its State aid control on the potentially most distortive cases. In addition, this will enable the transport sector to embrace the green and digital transition in line with the EU's strategic objectives, in particular those of the EU Green Deal and the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy.

The proposed Regulation will now be discussed in Council.

Link to Commission statement [here](#)

State Aid

Sweden. The Commission has approved a [€154 million \(SEK 1,635 million\) Swedish scheme](#) to support the livestock sector and the greenhouse production in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Croatia. The Commission has approved an up to [€500 million Croatian scheme](#) to support companies across sectors in the context of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Italy. The Commission has approved, under EU State aid rules, [a €1.2 billion Italian scheme](#) made available through the Recovery and Resilience Facility ('RRF') to support investments in photovoltaic panels in the agricultural sector.

Next Generation EU

On Friday, the Commission received an official recovery and resilience plan from the Netherlands. This plan sets out the reforms and public investment projects that the Netherlands plans to implement with the support of the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF).

Link to Commission statement [here](#)

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European Council and Council of the European Union Highlights Week 4 to 10 July 2022.

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No meetings were scheduled.

European Court of Auditors

Report: "The Commission's response to fraud in the Common Agricultural Policy: Time to dig deeper",

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) published [special report 14/2022](#) "The Commission's response to fraud in the Common Agricultural Policy: Time to dig deeper".

Report: Leader and community-led local development facilitates local engagement but additional benefits still not sufficiently demonstrated",

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) has just published [special report 10/2022](#) "LEADER and community-led local development facilitates local engagement but additional benefits still not sufficiently demonstrated",

Opinion

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) published [opinion 04/2022](#) concerning the legislative proposal to amend the Regulation on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union

Interparliamentary Meetings with National Parliaments Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union Second Semester

Date	Meeting	Presidency, EP Committee	Location
10 – 11 July 2022 (Sunday-Monday)	Czech Presidency. Meeting of the Chairpersons of COSAC	Czech Presidency	Prague (Senate in charge)
Postponed until autumn	Interparliamentary Meeting on the Principle of Universal Jurisdiction.	DROI- JURI	EP Brussels
12 July PM	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the Rights of Ukrainian Women Fleeing the War	FEMM	EP, Brussels
4 - 5 September 2022 (Sunday-Monday)	Interparliamentary Conference for the Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Common Security and Defence Policy (IPC-CFSP/CSDP)	Czech Presidency AFET	Prague (Chamber in charge)
September - October (tbc)	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the assessment of the 2022 European Semester and on the Priorities for the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy.	ECON	EP, Brussels

Interparliamentary Meetings with National Parliaments

Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Second Semester

10 – 11 October 2022 (Monday-Tuesday)	Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union (IPC-SECG)	Czech Presidency BUDG ECON EMPL	Prague (Chamber in charge)
24 – 25 October 2022 (Monday-Tuesday)	11th Meeting of the Joint Parliamentary Scrutiny Group on Europol (JPSG on Europol)	Czech Presidency LIBE	EP ,Brussels,
26 October TBC	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the conclusions of the COFE and the role of national Parliaments in the EU (exact title tbc)	AFCO	EP, Brussels
13 – 15 November 2022 (Sunday-Tuesday)	LXVIII Conference of Parliamentary Committees for Union Affairs of Parliaments of the European Union (COSAC)	Czech Presidency	Prague (Chamber in charge)
30 November (TBC)	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on the current EU Foreign and Security Challenges (exact title tbc)	AFET	EP Brussels
November (tbc)	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on Eurojust	LIBE	EP, Brussels
December (tbc)	Interparliamentary Committee Meeting on Rule of Law.	LIBE	EP, Brussels
January/February 2023	Meeting of the Secretaries General of the European Union Parliaments (EUSG)	Prague (Senate in charge)	
April/May 2023	Conference of the Speakers of European Union Parliaments (EUSC)	Prague (Senate in charge)	



Sources: Websites of: European Parliament European Commission, European Council and Council of the European Union Council, European Court of Auditors and European Ombudsman.