

Article – Plenary highlights: EU's 2020 budget, Syria, Sakharov Prize, bees



Brexit

MEPs discussed on Tuesday the [Brexit](#) agreement reached last week between EU and UK negotiators. The constitutional affairs committee has already started to scrutinise the deal, but most members think Parliament should only vote on it after the UK has given its approval. Check out what Parliament's Brexit coordinator Guy Verhofstadt had to say about the deal in our [Facebook Live](#).

EU budget for 2020

On Wednesday Parliament adopted its position on the [EU's budget for next year](#), ahead of negotiations with the Council. MEPs want an [addition €2 billion to fight climate change](#).

Syria

MEPs discussed [Turkey's military operation in Syria](#) on Wednesday. They condemned Erdogan's government and called on the EU to adopt measures against the country, such as sanctions against government officials, an arms export embargo and a suspension of trade agreements or even the customs union.

Bees

In a resolution adopted on Wednesday, MEPs are asking the European Commission to come up with stricter rules to [protect bees from pesticides](#) and also voted

against the current proposal, which was watered down by EU countries.

Sakharov Prize

Parliament's Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought goes to [Ilham Tohti](#), a jailed economist fighting for the rights of China's Uyghur minority. Parliament president David Sassoli announced the 2019 winner on Thursday. The award ceremony is scheduled for 18 December in Strasbourg.

Juncker

In a debate with Jean-Claude Juncker on Tuesday morning, MEPs took stock of the [work and achievements of the outgoing Commission](#). They praised him on dealing with the Brexit negotiations and the economic and migration crises and for moving away from austerity,. However, they also said more could have been done on climate change and environmental protection as well as on measures to protect whistle-blowers.

Enlargement

Parliament confirmed on Thursday its support for opening EU accession talks with Albania and North Macedonia while MEPs expressed disappointment over the lack of agreement among EU countries.

Tax transparency for multinationals

MEPs urged member states to find agreement on draft rules obliging multinationals to [report publicly on their profits and tax paid in each EU country](#) in a debate on Tuesday. The measure aims to boost transparency and discourage profit shifting, but the Council has still not managed to agree a position.

Thomas Cook

Following the bankruptcy of UK travel agency [Thomas Cook](#), MEPs called Thursday for plans to mitigate the economic impact and for stronger protection of consumers.