

Article – Plenary highlights: Sakharov Prize, EU Ombudsman, pollinators



Uyghur scholar and human rights activist [Ilham Tohti](#) was awarded the [2019 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought](#) during a [ceremony](#) on Wednesday 18 December. As Tohti is currently imprisoned for life in China on separatism-related charges, his daughter Jewher Ilham accepted the award on his behalf. Following a debate about China's repression of the Uyghurs, MEPs called for Tohti and Uyghur prisoners to be released from jail immediately, in a resolution adopted on Thursday.

Emily O'Reilly has been re-elected as [European Ombudsman](#), allowing her to continue investigating complaints against EU bodies for the next five years. She was re-elected by MEPs in a secret ballot in Strasbourg on 18 December 2019.

MEPs raised concerns about the credibility of investigations into the murder of Maltese journalist Daphne Caruana Galizia and the lack of progress on related accusations in a [resolution](#) adopted on Wednesday.

MEPs called on the European Commission to come up with new measures to [protect bees and other pollinators](#) in a resolution adopted on Wednesday.

In a resolution adopted on Wednesday, MEPs expressed their deep concern at the growing number of [attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex \(LGBTI\) people](#) in the EU, including zones "free from LGBTI ideology" established by dozens of local authorities in the south-east of Poland.

MEPs are calling for more measures to ensure [multinationals pay their fair](#)

[share of taxes](#). They debated the need to modernise corporate tax rules to take into account globalisation and the digital revolution on Tuesday and adopted a [resolution](#) the following day.

On Wednesday morning, members debated the results of the [EU summit on 12-13 December](#) with European Council President Charles Michel and Commission President Ursula von der Leyen. The summit dealt with issues such as climate change, the European Green Deal, the EU's next long-term budget, as well as Brexit.

MEPs questioned the European Commission about its plans to tackle schemes the misuse of EU funds during a debate on Tuesday, stressing the damage caused to the credibility of EU policies.

The [10th anniversary of the Lisbon Treaty](#) and the [European Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) was celebrated on Wednesday morning. The treaty introduced reforms in the EU, such as a higher level of democratic accountability and better protection of civil, political, economic and social rights.