

**GARCÍA PÉREZ Iratxe** - President of the S&D Group

Debate on: Tuesday, 23 April

## The new European Competitiveness deal and the EU strategic agenda 2024–2029

"Our political family has played an instrumental role in shaping policies and legislation aimed at addressing pressing issues, advancing social progress and protecting consumer rights. Our commitment doesn't end here. In order to make the single market fit for the future, we need to adapt to new realities and we have to shift our focus towards a real social economy. We envision a modern economy that creates jobs, protects the rights of workers and enables the shift towards a more sustainable model of production.

"We call for a permanent investment fund as a tool to enable member states to ensure huge investments, which are needed to tackle current and future challenges. We also work for fairer taxation of big tech companies and new taxation methods that keep up with the increasing digitalisation of the economy while ending tax avoidance from big companies who benefit from the EU single market."



**GARCÍA PÉREZ Iratxe**

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**GARCÍA PÉREZ Iratxe** - President of the S&D Group

Debate on: Tuesday, 23 April    Vote on: Wednesday, 24 April

## New EU fiscal rules

"The Socialists and Democrats support a much-needed and long-awaited deal on the reform of EU fiscal rules. Clearly, we wanted more and we put forward many progressive proposals that we fought for against the attacks from the conservatives and the liberals. The agreement is a step in the right direction and it creates opportunities for further improvements. This deal is undoubtedly much better than no deal and going back to the old rules or having no rules at all. We can be proud of a strong social imprint in the new rules, especially of a historic new tool to monitor social progress. We safeguarded social and climate priorities that right-wing parties sought to eliminate. We secured several other solutions that allow for more flexibility and investments, which make the whole process more democratic. What is now key is to focus on the future, seize the opportunities generated by this deal and put all our efforts into securing a permanent European investment tool. This is vital to ensure the resources needed to realise the socially-just green and digital transitions as well as to tackle other challenges."



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## The situation in the Middle East

### Debate on Iran's attack on Israel on Wednesday, 24 April, vote on Thursday 25 April

"We are extremely worried by the situation in Middle East. Iran's recent attack on Israel – which the social democrats strongly condemned – is unprecedented, unacceptable and a grave threat to global security. We must do our utmost to avoid a regional escalation. Any armed response would have devastating consequences and can only result in more violence, more suffering and more deaths."

### Debate on the repeated killing of humanitarian aid workers, journalists and civilians by the Israel Defence Forces in the Gaza Strip on Tuesday, 23 April

"On top of this, we mustn't forget about the emergency situation in Gaza. The far-right government of Prime Minister Netanyahu is directly responsible for the attacks on civilians, humanitarian aid workers and journalists. We call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire and the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution. The resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict entails a negotiated two-state solution, with mutual recognition from both parts as well as from the international community."



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## Improving conditions in platform work

"Next Wednesday, the European Parliament is set to take the final stretch on a rough journey to the historic EU law that will protect over 30 million platform workers, good employers, genuine self-employment and the European social model and economy. This breakthrough is a result of the relentless efforts of the progressive family and would not be possible without the Commissioner for jobs and social rights, Nicolas Schmit, who put forward a far-reaching legislative proposal. It was a hard battle against aggressive lobbying of platform giants and French president Emmanuel Macron and his fellow liberals in Germany, who sided with them. By ensuring protection to all workers in the digital era and introducing groundbreaking rules on algorithm management, this legislation makes Europe the pioneer in global labour law."



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## Growth Plan for the Western Balkans

"The agreement on the growth plan for the Western Balkans that will be endorsed next week by the European Parliament confirms the fresh impetus to the enlargement process. Throughout the negotiations, the S&Ds' emphasised the importance of the rule of law, transparency and reforms as the only vehicle to bring these countries closer to the EU. We insisted on the importance of full alignment with EU foreign policy, including on restrictive measures for progress on the path towards the EU. The S&Ds also ensured that the growth plan would promote democracy, human rights and gender equality in the region and thus progressively align it with the social, climate and environmental standards of the Union."



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## Ecodesign regulation

"It is high time we moved away from the detrimental 'take, make, dispose' model that adversely impacts our planet, health and economy. Future product designs should prioritise benefits for all, show respect for our planet, and ensure environmental protection. Sustainable products will become the norm, allowing consumers to save energy, to repair and make smart environmental choices when they are shopping. Additionally, the ban on the destruction of unsold textiles and footwear will play a crucial role in reshaping the manufacturing practices of the fast fashion industry."



**MORETTI Alessandra**

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**LEITÃO-MARQUES Maria-Manuel** – European Parliament co-negotiator on the matter in the committee on the internal market and consumer protection

**Debate on:** Monday, 22 April **Vote on:** Tuesday, 23 April

## Prohibiting products made with forced labour on the Union market

"I am very proud that, in Strasbourg, we will put the final seal on the first EU law to ban products made with forced labour on the EU market, regardless if they were made in the EU or any third country. Shirts, shoes or cars, made by enslaved Uyghurs, Turkmen, or forced workers anywhere, should not be sold in our shops anymore. Under the new rules, the Commission will be responsible for carrying out investigations into cases of forced labour outside the EU, while member states will carry out investigations within the EU. If the investigation concludes that forced labour has been used, goods will have to be confiscated, and then donated, recycled or destroyed.

"This new law is one of the biggest achievements of this legislature, and a victory for our political family. The EU puts human rights at the heart of our international trade and internal market!"



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**INCIR Evin** – European Parliament's co-negotiator on the matter in the committee on civil liberties, justice and home affairs

**Debate on:** Tuesday, 23 April **Vote on:** Wednesday, 24 April

## Directive on combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

"After a decade of calls, and thanks to the insistent pressure and campaigning done by our Group, the EU will finally have the first-ever law to combat violence against women. It is a solid legal instrument which will help us – among others – to fight gender-based cyber violence, like cyberstalking and cyber-flashing. The new directive will also make female genital mutilation a criminal offence, punishable across the EU, and forced marriage will be criminalised at EU level.

"However, we regret that the Council rejected our demand to include the crime of non-consensual sex as rape. Some member states argued that there was no legal basis for that, when in fact what was most lacking was a political will by leaders like French president Macron and minister for justice Buschmann in Germany.

"For the S&Ds, the new directive is just the first step, and we are determined to continue the fight until women everywhere in the EU are protected from all forms of gender-based violence."



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## Right to repair

“Every year, the premature replacement of goods represents a loss of up to €12 billion in consumers’ pockets and the creation of 35 million tonnes of waste. We want to empower consumers and incentivise them to choose repairing their goods instead of being obliged to replace them. With the right to repair, we will bolster repair shops to offer competitive and affordable repair. To this aim, the S&D Group fought to ensure that independent repairers and consumers would have access to spare parts as well as tools at a reasonable cost that does not deter repair. More competition will drive down repair costs and encourage consumers across Europe to embrace the repair culture. With the right to repair, we will promote a more sustainable consumption of goods, protect the environment and save consumers’ money.”



**REPASI René**

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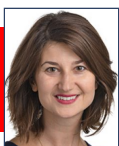
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## Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence

“We cannot continue to tolerate the use of forced and child labour, land grabbing – including from indigenous communities – pollution and destruction of the environment. With the vote on the Due Diligence law next Wednesday, we are finally holding large companies responsible for violations of human rights and environmental standards. This is a major victory for the Socialists and Democrats, who initiated this fight four years ago and led the negotiations on behalf of the European Parliament. Despite the last-minute changes imposed by the Council, the core elements of the directive remain untouched. The agreement sets a robust mandatory due diligence framework, well aligned with international standards, and a revolutionary liability regime, which includes key access to justice measures that our Group defended so strongly.”



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## Ambient air quality and cleaner air for Europe

"The revised Ambient Air Quality Directive introduces stricter rules to lead us towards a future of cleaner air and better health for everyone. In the European Union, air pollution contributes to approximately 300,000 premature deaths annually and aggravates serious conditions like heart attacks, strokes, respiratory problems, diabetes, dementia and lung cancer. Thanks to the leadership of the S&Ds, this directive has become a more effective tool in combating air pollution. We have halved our ambient air quality limit values, improved our monitoring processes and introduced new air quality roadmaps to ease implementation. We have also strengthened public information and included new provisions for access to justice. This new directive underscores our commitment to safeguarding public health and tackling health inequalities."



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## S&D Group press conference

[GARCÍA PÉREZ Iratxe, President](#)

23/04/2024, 13:30 - 14:00

Daphne Caruana Galizia room - Strasbourg, Weiss N-1/201

[Webstreaming here](#)

[Journalists who want to participate and ask questions can connect via this link](#)

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