

September plenary: What to expect

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News

MEPs have a busy week ahead, including Juncker's State of the Union speech and a vote on CO2 standards for cars and vans.



European Parliament Strasbourg | *Photo credit: Press Association*

MEPs will debate the state of EU-US relations, which have been tested by US President Donald Trump's imposition of steel and aluminium tariffs.

A report authored by German EPP group member Elmar Brok will be voted on Wednesday. It criticises current challenges in cooperation which are "harmful" to the interests of both the EU and the US, such as the 'America first' policy, withdrawal from the Paris climate agreement, the cancellation of the Iran nuclear agreement, the new approach to trade policies, and punitive tariffs.

The report by the former foreign affairs committee Chair insists at the same time that the EU and the

US should continue to play “key roles” by jointly addressing regional conflicts and global challenges based on international law.

In a busy week, Parliament will also vote on the EU plastics strategy and a report on the issue drafted by ECR group MEP Mark Demesmaeker.

The report says that “plastic is an important material which has a useful place in our society and economy. However, the way in which plastics are produced and used is both unaffordable and unsustainable. While plastic is developed to last forever, it is routinely designed to be disposed of after use.”

The report puts forward a “clear vision for managing plastics in a sustainable and responsible way, across the entire value chain.”

MEPs will also continue their series of debates with member state leaders on Wednesday with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras appearing before the plenary.

On Tuesday, deputies vote on a report by Welsh MEP Jill Evans on ‘Language equality in the digital age’. Her report looks at the use of languages in digital technology and makes a number of recommendations for action to the European Commission.

Speaking ahead of this, Evans said, “Language technologies are becoming central to our lives, but much of this technology is only available in a few widely-spoken languages.

“The EU is investing very little in language technologies compared with the USA and Asia, and Europe is falling behind. The report calls for action at EU level to tackle this.”

Meanwhile, MEPs from the environment committee will make a keenly awaited decision on CO2 standards for cars and vans.

Elsewhere, MEPs and the President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker will hold the annual State of the Union debate on Wednesday, his last before he leaves office next year.

About the author

Martin Banks is a senior reporter for the Parliament Magazine

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