
European Parliament Press Kit for the European Council of 19 December 2024

In this press kit, you will find a selection of the European Parliament's press releases reflecting MEPs' priorities for topics on the summit agenda.

European Parliament President Roberta Metsola will represent Parliament at the summit, where she will address the heads of state or government at 10.00 and hold a press conference after her speech.

When: Press conference at around 11.00 on 19 December

Where: European Council press room and via [Parliament's webstreaming](#) or [EbS+](#).

At their meeting in Brussels, EU Heads of State or Government will review the latest developments in Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the EU's support for Kyiv, amidst the uncertainty of the new US administration's approach to the conflict. The European Council will also assess the situation in the Middle East, following the recent ceasefire in Lebanon between Hezbollah and Israel, the humanitarian crisis in Gaza and the dozens of Israeli hostages still held by Hamas.

Other topics for leaders include the EU's geopolitical role, crisis prevention and response, and migration management. The December 2024 European Council will be the first chaired by [President António Costa](#), who replaced [Charles Michel](#) on 1 December 2024 as President. The new European Commission led by Ursula von der Leyen also took office on 1 December, following a plenary [confirmation vote on 27 November](#).

MEPs outlined their demands and expectation for the summit during a debate on 18 December. [You can watch it here](#).

Russia's war against Ukraine

On 17 December, MEPs debated Russia's manipulation of history and use of false narratives to justify its war against Ukraine, with EU Foreign Policy Chief Kaja Kallas. A draft resolution will be voted on by MEPs during the 20-23 January 2025 plenary session. The debate focussed on Russian historical disinformation narratives to discredit and undermine international support for Ukraine, efforts which are intended to damage Ukrainian independence and sovereignty. [You can watch the debate here](#).

On 28 November 2024, MEPs adopted a resolution calling for more military support for Ukraine in light of China and North Korea's involvement in the war. They condemned Russia's use of North Korean troops against the Ukrainian army and its testing of new ballistic missiles in Ukraine. This recent escalation represents new phase in the war and a new risk to Europe's security as a whole, MEPs argue, calling on the EU and Ukraine's other partners to respond accordingly.

Insisting that "no negotiations about Ukraine can take place without Ukraine", MEPs urge the EU to work towards achieving the broadest possible international coalition of support for Ukraine and identifying a peaceful solution to the war. Parliament calls for the EU and member states to directly support the implementation of Ukraine's Peace Formula, establishing the necessary conditions for holding a second Summit on Peace with participation by countries from the Global South. The resolution also calls on the Council to increase its sanctions against Russia, particularly against sectors of special economic importance, such as the metallurgical, nuclear, chemical, agricultural and banking sectors, and on Russian raw materials.

Extraordinary plenary session with Volodymyr Zelenskyy

On 19 November 2024, Parliament held an extraordinary plenary session with Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, marking 1000 days since Russia's full-scale invasion. Opening the sitting, EP President Roberta Metsola said that Parliament would continue standing with Ukraine until it has "freedom and real peace, for as long as it takes." She added that the Ukrainian people's sacrifice over the last 1000 days is not just for themselves but for every European's freedom and way of life.

Measures against the Russian "shadow fleet"

In a resolution adopted on 14 November 2024, Parliament calls for more targeted EU sanctions against Russia's so-called 'shadow fleet', which provides a key financial lifeline for Moscow's war in Ukraine. MEPs demand measures against these vessels in the next EU sanctions packages, including all individual ships as well as their owners, operators, managers, accounts, banks and insurance companies. They also call for the systematic sanctioning of vessels sailing through EU waters without known insurance and urge the EU to enhance its surveillance capabilities, especially drone and satellite monitoring, and demand targeted inspections to be conducted at sea. MEPs want EU member states to identify ports capable of handling sanctioned vessels carrying crude oil and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and to seize illegal cargo without compensation.

Financial assistance to Ukraine

On 22 October 2024, MEPs gave their green light for an extraordinary loan of up to €35 billion to Ukraine, to be repaid with future revenues from frozen Russian assets. Parliament endorsed this new macro-financial assistance (MFA) to support Ukraine against Russia's brutal war of aggression. The loan represents the EU's contribution to a G7 package agreed in June 2024, to

provide up to \$50 billion (approximately €45 billion) in financial support to Ukraine. The final amount that the EU will contribute could be lower, depending on the size of the loans provided by other G7 partners.

The Ukraine Loan Cooperation Mechanism, a newly established framework, will make future revenues from the frozen Russian Central Bank assets located in the EU available to Ukraine. These funds will help Ukraine service and repay the EU's MFA loan as well as loans from other G7 partners. While the mechanism's funds can be used to service and repay loans, Kyiv may allocate the MFA funds as it sees fit.

Further reading

[More military support for Ukraine amid the involvement of China and North Korea](#)

[Zelenskyy to MEPs: "We must end this war fairly and justly"](#)

[1000 days: Statement on Ukraine by European Parliament's leaders](#)

[Newly elected Parliament reaffirms its strong support for Ukraine](#)

[MEPs approve trade support measures for Ukraine with protection for EU farmers](#)

[How the EU is supporting Ukraine](#)

[EU stands with Ukraine](#)

MEPs to contact

[David McALLISTER](#), (EPP, DE) Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

[Marie-Agnes STRACK-ZIMMERMANN](#) (Renew, DE), Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence

[Karin KARLSBRO](#) (Renew, SE), rapporteur on macro-financial assistance to Ukraine

Situation in the Middle East

On 17 December 2024, MEPs and High Representative Kaja Kallas debated the latest events, geopolitical implications, and potential outcomes of the toppling of the Assad regime in Syria. A resolution will be voted on by MEPs at a future plenary session. The new EU foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas said in her [statement](#) that the territorial integrity of Syria must be preserved, with respect for its sovereignty and state institutions, and the rejection of all forms of extremism. [You can watch the debate here.](#)

[In a statement issued on 8 December](#), leading MEPs welcomed “the end of Syria’s brutal dictatorship” and called for a peaceful transition that fulfils the democratic aspirations of all Syrians and ensures the protection of all.

[President Metsola marked the one-year anniversary](#) of terrorist attacks in Israel at the opening of the 7-10 October 2024 plenary session in Strasbourg. Recalling the horror of that day “that will live in infamy”, President Metsola said nothing could ever justify the indiscriminate mass murder, rape, kidnapping and torture that occurred one year ago. Since then, too few have been able to make it back to their loved ones - “this house will continue to do what we can to help bring them all home”, she said.

Further reading

[Parliament marks one year from the October 7th attacks in Israel](#)

[Parliament condemns Iran’s attack on Israel and calls for de-escalation](#)

[Parliament calls on Israel to open all crossings to Gaza for humanitarian aid](#)

[Israel-Hamas war: MEPs call for a permanent ceasefire under two conditions](#)

MEPs to contact

[David McALLISTER](#), (EPP, DE), Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

[Marie-Agnes STRACK-ZIMMERMANN](#) (Renew, DE), Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence

EU preparedness in an uncertain world

On 14 November 2024, former Finnish President Sauli Niinistö presented his report on how the EU can better prepare for future civil and military crises, followed by a debate between MEPs. In this report entitled “[Strengthening Europe’s civil and military preparedness and readiness](#)”, the former Finnish President recommends the EU take a more proactive approach to preparedness and comprehensive security instead of merely reacting to shock events, as the world becomes more crisis-prone and less predictable. The report’s recommendations will feed into the programme of the new European Commission, including through the upcoming [Preparedness Union Strategy](#) and the [White Paper on the future of European defence](#). You can [watch the debate with Sauli Niinistö here](#).

Further reading

[Foreign policy, security and defence: the EU should focus on strategic alliances](#)

MEPs to contact

[Nathalie LOISEAU](#) (Renew, FR) Chair of the Subcommittee on Security and Defence

[David McAllister](#) (EPP, Germany), Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee and rapporteur on the Common Foreign and Security Policy

Enlargement (including Georgia and Moldova)

On Wednesday 18 December, the President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili delivered a speech to the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

Welcoming President Zourabichvili to the hemicycle, [European Parliament President Roberta Metsola](#) said: “When you last visited this House, we discussed your country’s progress towards joining our European family. Today, this journey is under threat. I know that there are many in Georgia today who fear for their country’s future. I speak for this entire House when I say to all Georgians who look to Europe for support and for their future: you are not alone. We see you, we hear you, we are with you. This House stands strong with Georgia in its journey towards Europe.”

You can [watch the debate here](#).

On 17 December 2024, MEPs debated the street protests rocking Georgia following the recent disputed elections. The current demonstrations were triggered by the Georgian government’s decision to pause the country’s EU accession process following disputed parliamentary elections in October 2024. The ruling Georgian Dream party claimed victory after the latest ballot, despite international observers, including MEPs, and the Georgian opposition warning of serious irregularities. The ongoing protests, which have been met with a heavy-handed crackdown by the Georgian police, have led to calls for a re-run of the election and for the Georgian government to reverse deepening Russian influence and return to its path towards EU accession. [You can watch the debate here](#).

[On 28 November, Parliament adopted a resolution](#) condemning the 26 October parliamentary elections in Georgia, an EU candidate country, for being neither free nor fair, representing yet another manifestation of the continued democratic backsliding of the country “for which the ruling Georgian Dream party is fully responsible”. MEPs reject any recognition of the parliamentary elections as a result, as the international community should too, and want the elections re-run within a year under thorough international supervision and by an independent election administration. They call on the EU to severely restrict formal EU-level contacts with the Georgian government and parliament, while stating clearly that Georgia, as a result of recently adopted anti-democratic legislation, including the ‘law on transparency and foreign influence’,

has already had its EU integration process effectively suspended.

On 9 October, MEPs adopted a resolution issuing a strong warning against continued Russian attempts to derail Moldova's pro-European trajectory. The text vehemently condemns Russia's escalation of hostile activities, interference and hybrid operations ahead of the country's presidential election and constitutional referendum on EU integration on 20 October. MEPs highlight the role played by a plethora of malicious actors, including pro-Russian Moldovan oligarchs and Russia's state-funded RT network, in carrying out voter fraud schemes as well as cyber operations and information warfare. They also call on the EU and its member states to ensure that all necessary assistance is provided to Moldova to strengthen its institutional mechanisms and ability to respond to hybrid threats.

The European Parliament reaffirms its support for Moldova's path towards EU accession, calling on the European Commission to include the country in the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA III) and to prioritise funding for EU candidate countries in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) for 2028-2034. With EU accession talks with Moldova already underway, MEPs call for a faster screening process and the timely organisation of subsequent intergovernmental conferences.

In a resolution adopted on 13 December 2023, Parliament described the EU's enlargement policy as one of the strongest geopolitical tools at its disposal, representing a strategic investment in peace and security. MEPs are urging the European Council to open accession negotiations with Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova. As long as certain steps are taken, MEPs say that accession talks should also be opened with Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Georgia should be granted candidate status.

MEPs also stress that the EU should establish a clear enlargement timetable for candidate countries to conclude accession negotiations by 2030. There should, however, be no fast-track route to membership. MEPs insist that the so-called Copenhagen criteria must be fulfilled to ensure that candidate and potential candidate countries demonstrate a consistent and enduring commitment to democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for the protection of minorities, and economic reforms.

Further reading

[Parliament calls for new elections in Georgia](#)

[It is a pivotal moment for Georgia, say MEPs](#)

[Georgian elections raise further concerns about democratic backsliding](#)

[Serbia and Kosovo must work to de-escalate the situation in northern Kosovo](#)

[Montenegro's EU accession progress is losing momentum](#)

[Parliament pushes for start of EU accession talks with Moldova](#)

[MEPs call on EU and Türkiye to look for alternative ways to cooperate](#)

[MEPs assess the situation in Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina](#)

MEPs to contact

[David McAllister](#) (EPP, Germany), Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee

[Nils Ušakovs](#) (S&D, Latvia), Chair of the Delegation for relations with the South Caucasus

[Sergey Lagodinsky](#) (Greens/EFA, Germany), Chair of the Delegation to the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly

[Antonio López-Istúriz White](#) (EPP, ES), Head of the European Parliament observation delegation to the elections in Georgia

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