



LYMEC Digital Assembly (Online) 2 September 2023 MINUTES

Dan-Aria Sucuri (LYMEC President):

- ❖ Welcomes everyone, explains what the Digital Assembly is about and how it will proceed. We will receive insights from **Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP)** on the topics of external relations, enlargement, the Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership. The keynote address will be moderated by **Sahra Lissek (Friedrich Naumann Foundation for Freedom (FNF) - European Dialogue European Affairs Manager)**. The address will be followed by a Q/A session for participants to deepen their knowledge on the topic of the event. The additional topics to be discussed will be: Enlargement, Turkey, Syria, China, Russia, TTIP, COVAX.
- ❖ We will then deal with the latest proposals for resolutions of the working group on the renewal of our Policy Book. This part of the Digital Assembly is dedicated to the clean-up of the second half of Chapter 9 of the Policy Book with **Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer)**. This is also the last renewal process for the Policy Book.

Sahra Lissek (FNF EU Dialogue - European Affairs Manager): Thank you and good morning everyone from Brussels. I am very happy to join you all online for this event. We are glad to have today with us **Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP)**, Vice-Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and former Estonian Minister of Foreign Affairs. After the intervention, there will be a Q&A to engage in a discussion with **Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP)**.

Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): On the one hand, when it comes to EU enlargement, you might have noticed that, for a long period of time, no new members acceded to the EU. On the other hand, if you look at NATO, it has experienced enlargement during the last years, as we saw with Finland and Montenegro. Democracy-based organisations are still enlarging. It has actually not been the case for the EU since Croatia joined, as the EU decision-making process is not easy, which makes consensus hard to reach. If you look at the candidate countries, the majority of them are Western Balkans. The reality is that no country from that region is ready to join the EU at this stage.

I don't see any real chances for enlargement in the future if the decision-making process is not revised. During negotiations, you have close to 200 possibilities to break the talks. This is what happened with Turkey when new chapters of the negotiation were opened, because of other Member States blocking them as soon as they started.



You noticed that some existing Member States, such as Romania and Bulgaria, still cannot join Schengen despite being part of the EU for over 10 years now. Some other EU Member States have made the commitment to adopt the Euro, but they haven't done so yet. So we can see that there are still outstanding integration issues even in countries that are already members of the EU.

The Eastern Partnership programme (EaP) hasn't been a success story either. The EU cannot prepare those countries, but support their original will. If there is a lack of understanding in those countries, then it is very difficult for the EU to help.

Sahra Lissek (FNF EU Dialogue - European Affairs Manager): Thank you for your insightful intervention. As you mentioned the Western Balkans, what measures do you believe the EU should implement to demonstrate its continued commitment and support for their integration into the Union? In terms of approach, what steps should the EU take to formulate a comprehensive strategy in the region?

Urmas Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): In the last 10 years, the EU has expressed strong political and financial support to those countries. However, the EU can only support their domestic development. There are very concrete issues in each of them, such as systematically being unaligned with the EU Common Security and Defence Policy, as we can see right now with the war against Ukraine. Some of them have very serious domestic political issues with their neighbours, and if you have disputes with Member States, it is clear that you cannot proceed with your application to join the EU. Moreover, when an authoritarian regime attacks a country that would like to be part of the EU, the EU cannot sit and wait. It should use political tools to support the country under attack.

The EU clearly has to be on track to support Western Balkans, but it should not be unconditioned. We see that many countries in the world exploit the EU's naivety by taking its cash and not delivering, as they have the feeling that European money is reaching them anyways.

Sahra Lissek (FNF EU Dialogue - European Affairs Manager): What should be the strategy put forward by the EU to support the Eastern Partnership?

Urmas Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): The strategy should be analysed case by case. To start with, Belarus lost its independence under Lukashenko and is now an appendix of the Russian regime. As for Caucasus countries, Armenia and Azerbaijan are at war against each other. It is hard to imagine how their relations with the EU could develop if their countries currently are at war. Georgia, instead, is a huge disappointment. It started as a frontrunner, but now we see that its relationship with Russia is not encouraging. Ukraine and Moldova have



formally applied for candidate status, but Ukraine has to win the war first and Moldova is suffering from its implications.

On some issues, the EU should show full support to all of these countries. On other issues, it has been too slow in the past to engage those countries economically through lower customs tariffs, by importing their goods in the EU market and overall engaging them economically. The internal market is the most powerful tool the EU has. We should use it. We should not leave the world market in the hands of Russia or China. All this demands the use of the EU's economic power as a geopolitical tool.

Sahra Lissek (FNF EU Dialogue - European Affairs Manager): The floor is open for questions from the participants.

Jaroslav Ambroz (Mlade ANO): Thank you for this tremendous speech. Which geographical borders do you see as actors of the EU enlargement in the near future?

Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): The answer is Europe! There are countries that are not ready yet, others that don't want to join but are ready, others that have recently left but I would love to see rejoining.

Jaroslav Ambroz (Mlade ANO): We have seen a trade war between the US and China. Can the EU play a role to de-escalate the situation?

Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): This is a very serious issue. China is the first trading partner for 132 countries in the world, which means that the impact of this trade war is global. We should have a common policy towards China, shared by all EU Member States, as we do right now with Russia.

I would like the EU, US and other democracies to have common approaches towards China and other authoritarian regimes. The EU should not be an intermediary between the US and China. And if you look at the reasons why there are tensions between China and the EU, they don't have to do with business or economy. It is about the different sets of values they are based on.

Ioana Abaseaca (USR Tineret): Do you think that the next European Parliament formed in 2024 will be able to adopt any political decisions over a realistic date when a new country will accede to the European Union?

Urmaz Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): The European Parliament is very important, but the ball is in the hands of Member States. No enlargement can happen with the high unanimity threshold in the Council. If you ask about the next 5 years, I am rather pessimistic about it. If I look where those candidate countries are now and where the general public opinion and political will are, I am rather sceptical that any accession will happen in the near future.



Rowan Fitton (Alliance Youth): If we are serious about this peace project, then why don't we promote enlargement even more? What is your thought around this approach?

Urmas Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): I agree with you, the issue is that all 27 Member States also have their own internal politics, different coalitions, governments and views. Some of them look for an idealistic approach, but with slogans only, you cannot achieve what you want. We still have 27 different political environments in the EU. There is no common approach that works everywhere. If we really want to counterbalance authoritarian regimes, we need to stick together and enlarge the EU and NATO.

Sorcha Ni Chonghaile (Ogra Fianna Fail): When politicians talk about enlargement, the citizens do not necessarily understand what it is about. How do you meet this gap?

Urmas Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): I think the only way is explaining how this influences us as citizens and that in today's world everything is interconnected. The stronger Europe is, the higher chances are to counteract authoritarian regimes. That impacts citizens directly.

Ekin Syyahhan (3H Movement): Do you think EU enlargement issues could feed far right parties and are there any measures to prevent this?

Urmas Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP): If you see how those extreme parties win their support, it is a very simple language. We should show how one thing influences another. We should argue on fact-based inputs, instead of counterbalancing with slogans. We have to be realistic. It is not enough to say that enlargement is important. We have to answer the 'why', and I think we are not very clear yet in our argumentation. This discussion is very country-centred, but I think most of the discussions are rather local. The more local the issue is, the more the citizens take it personally.

Sahra Lissek (FNF EU Dialogue - European Affairs Manager) and **Dan-Aria Sucuri (LYMEC President)** thank **Urmas Paet (Renew Europe Group MEP)** and give the floor to **Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer)** to go through the outcomes of the last Policy Book renewal.

Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer)

Amendments table:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1mHFuRzN8eOcBiIBC17wrzevR4V-G1ml85X8_dE8BtnQ/edit#gid=0



- ❖ The Policy Book renewal process is an ongoing project of cleaning up the Policy Book. We are today discussing the second half of **Chapter 9**. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and the first half of Chapter 9 have already been reviewed. **This is the last part of the Policy Book Renewal.**
- ❖ All the Members have had the chance to submit their amendments before the Digital Assembly (DA). They still have the possibility to submit amendments and take the floor if they wish.
- ❖ As a reminder, only Heads of Delegations should vote in the chat (and only once per amendment), but all delegates can speak in the debate. **Ines Holzegger (LYMEC Vice-President)** will open the vote in the chat and count the votes. Heads of Delegation need to have a '1' in front of their name.
- ❖ The amendments submitted today will have to be resubmitted before the 2023 Autumn Congress on Openslides by the relevant statutory deadlines.

Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) displays the outcomes of the renewal process of the second half of Chapter 9 on the screen.

Comments made by participants on each resolution and amendment are as follows:



Resolutions and amendments	WG Recommendation	DA Outcome on the resolution	Comments by participants
NEW 9.20 Resolution on the Situation in Kosova	Merger of former 9.25 and 9.26	Resolution: Positive AMD 1 - Positive AMD 2 - Positive	<p>Julius Graack (Julis): I know we have another resolution on the Western Balkans, but you don't see points on the Erasmus programme there. That's why our amendments are made to put them all together.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone is against AMD 1.</p> <p>No one is against it. AMD 1 is adopted</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone is against AMD 2.</p> <p>No one is against it. AMD 2 is adopted.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as amended as a whole.</p> <p>No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the Working Group.</p>
OLD 9.20 Resolution on the Situation in Kosova	Archived (merged into new 9.20 with former 9.25 and 9.26)	Positive	/
9.22 Resolution on the Future of Kosova	Archived	Positive	/
9.23 Resolution on an Independent Kosova	Archived	Positive	/



9.24 Resolution on the Rights of the Albanians in Kosova	Archived	Positive	/
9.25 Independence is the Only Solution for Kosova	Archived (merged into new 9.20 with former 9.26)	Positive	/
9.26 Motion on the Republic of Kosovo	Archived (merged into new 9.20 with former 9.25)	Positive	/
9.27 Resolution on the Situation in Macedonia	Archived	Positive	/
9.28 Emergency Resolution on the Greek Embargo	Archived	Positive	/
9.29 Resolution Regarding the Conflicts in Macedonia and Preshevo Valley	Archived	Positive	/
9.30 Urgent Resolution: Greece Must Act as an EU Member State	Archived	Positive	/
9.31 Resolution on Serbia	Archived	Positive	/
9.32 Emergency Resolution on Serbia's Genocide	Archived	Positive	/



9.33 Urgent Resolution on Terrorist Activities in Southern Serbia and Kosova	Archived	Positive	/
9.34 Resolution on Customs Union with Turkey	Archived	Positive	/
9.35 Resolution on the Occupied Territories of the Republic of Croatia	Archived	Positive	/
9.36 Promoting sovereignty over natural resources for the people of Western Sahara	Updated	Positive	/
9.37 – Resolution on the Russian War of Aggression in Ukraine Ukraine-Russian war	Updated	Positive	/
9.38 - Resolution on the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP)	Updated	Positive	/



<p>9.39 – A coherent and ambitious EU development policy</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Resolution: Positive</p> <p>AMD 3 - Positive AMD 4 - Positive AMD 5 - Positive AMD 6 - No recommendation</p>	<p>Julius Graack (Julis): I would like to propose an addition connected to AMD 4.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone is against AMD 3 and 4.</p> <p>No one is against it. AMD 3 and 4 are adopted.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone is against the deletion.</p> <p>No one is against it.</p> <p>Julius Graack (Julis): I would like to add the following bullet point: <i>'Common European Development aid, roughly a third of the total EU development aid, is distributed through the Commission's Directorate-General for International Partnerships'</i>.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone is against the addition of the second bullet point added orally.</p> <p>No one is against it. The second bullet point is added to the adopted amendment. .</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on AMD 5.</p> <p>Helena Herzig (Julis): We should review agricultural subsidies and clarify that they will be phased out, this is important as we are in favour of market-based organisation.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone is against AMD 5.</p> <p>No one is against it. AMD 5 is adopted.</p>
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9.40 Adding more oil to the fire...	Archived	Positive	/
9.41 Resolution on common foreign policy towards Russia	Archived	Positive	/



<p>9.42 Tackling propaganda and fake news</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Resolution: Positive</p> <p>Oral amendment on the deletion of the bullet point on TV Rain.</p> <p>The vote is negative. The bullet point is kept. AMD 6bis was rejected.</p>	<p>Dmitriy Samovilov (YDM Vesna): TV Rain is the last independent Russian tv channel and an important source of information. We want to delete the bullet point stating <i>‘that an allegedly liberal Russian TV Rain channel involved in a series of scandals over the openly pro-war rhetoric of some of its reporters and a range of controversial broadcasts’</i>. We do not approve this bullet point. The journalists who made the mistake in the scandal apologised.</p> <p>Melissa Epstein (YDM Vesna): We want to make clear that we want to delete this point.</p> <p>Olena Dudko (EYU): YDM Vesna are now intervening but haven't contributed to the working group. This Russian channel celebrated the Russian army. There is evidence on that, it is available and there is a lot of rhetoric on that too. It has to be acknowledged that this channel is still using this rhetoric.</p> <p>Kristians Vasilevskis (Attistibai Youth): There was even a court case on TV Rain.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) opens a vote on the bullet point addition or removal.</p> <p>The vote is closed. The bullet point on TV Rain is kept. The AMD is rejected.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as a whole.</p> <p>No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the working group.</p>
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NEW 9.43 Resolution on the Western Balkans Enlargement Process	Merger of former 9.52 & 9.68	Positive	/
OLD 9.43 Resolution on the Western Balkans Enlargement Process	Archived (merged into new 9.43 with former 9.52 and 9.68)	Positive	/
9.44 Resolution on the racist and xenophobic riots in the USA	Updated	Resolution: Positive AMD 7 - Positive	Melvin Wahlen (CUF): We wrote this amendment as it is far needed to create a more liberal US. Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on AMD 7. No one is against. AMD 7 is adopted. Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as amended as a whole. No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the working group.
9.45 Break the Turkish Olive Branch in Afrin	Archived	Positive	/
9.46 Transparency and human rights led approach to EU deals with other countries on irregular migration	Kept	Positive	/
9.47 Support student activism internationally	Updated	Positive	/



9.48 EU support for sustainability and democracy in Tunisia	Updated	Positive	/
9.49 The relationship with Turkey under assessment	Kept	Positive	/
9.50 European Union's Role in Outer Space	Kept	Positive	/
9.51 Demand to Respect the Rights and Freedoms of the People of Hong Kong	Kept	Positive	/
9.52 Urgency resolution on the Start of EU accession negotiations	Archived (merged into new 9.43 with former 9.68)	Positive	/
9.53 Urgency Resolution on Peace and Stability after the Nagorno-Karabakh Peace Deal	Updated	Positive	/



<p>9.54 Let Taiwan be Taiwan: Recognise Taiwan as an Independent Sovereign State</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Melissa Epstein (YDM Vesna): Does the part on the 'One-China-Policy' force Taiwan to call themselves the Republic of China? I support a democratic and independent Taiwan.</p> <p>Sorcha Ni Chonghaile (Ogra Fianna Fail): I have the same point as Melissa Epstein (YDM Vesna).</p> <p>Arthur Wu (Young Liberals UK): I think we should be consistent with the European Parliament's position on Taiwan.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as updated.</p> <p>No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the working group.</p>
<p>9.55 A New Chapter for EU-UK Relations</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Sorcha Ni Chonghaile (Ogra Fianna Fail): this point is really important in order for us to have a policy on Brexit.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as updated.</p> <p>No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the working group.</p>
<p>9.56 Arctic Trade Routes: Addressing Growing Goeconomic and Geopolitical Factors in the Arctic</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>
<p>NEW 9.57 A European Response To, And Learning From COVID-19</p>	<p>Merger of former 9.57 and 9.66</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>



OLD 9.57 A European Response To, And Learning From COVID-19	Archived (Merged into new 9.57 with 9.66)	Positive	/
9.58 For the Democratic Transition and Future of Belarus	Updated	Positive	/
9.59 EUnited Against the Communist Party of China	Kept	Positive	/
9.60 Recognition of the Treatment of the Uyghurs by the People's Republic of China as a Genocide	Updated	Positive	/



<p>9.61 On Grave Violations of Human Rights and Misinformation Campaigns in Russia For Freedom and Democracy in Russia</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Resolution: Positive</p> <p>Oral amendment on the deletion of the bullet point on visa suspension.</p> <p>The vote is negative. The bullet point is kept. AMD 8 was rejected.</p>	<p>Melissa Epstein (YDM Vesna): I propose an amendment to delete the point on visa suspension. We want to remove this point or at least the part on <i>‘overwhelming support of the war among Russian citizens’</i>.</p> <p>Milana Shesterikova (YDM Vesna): This bullet point promotes discrimination based on passport and is counterproductive to fostering shared values among people.</p> <p>Olena Dudko (EYU): There was a LYMEC position on the ban on tourist visas for Russians, as well as a policy debate on the same topic. There is a huge number of Russians who came to Ukraine to fight with us. If you read correctly, there is nothing in this resolution calling for a visa ban, it is a visa suspension, which means that this is a temporary and selective measure.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) opens the vote on the deletion of the bullet point.</p> <p>The vote is negative. The bullet point is kept. AMD 8 is rejected.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as updated.</p> <p>No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the working group.</p>
<p>9.62 Urgency Resolution on Czech Out the Russian Influence</p>	<p>Kept</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>
<p>9.63 Demand to Stop Political Repressions Against Young Civil Rights Activists and to Restore the Rule of Law in Ukraine</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>



9.64 The Future of EU – Afghan Relations	Updated	Positive	/
9.65 In response to the asylum seekers' influx provoked by the illegitimate government of the Republic of Belarus	Kept	Positive	/
9.66 Boosting COVAX before boosting the EU	Archived (Merged into new 9.57)	Positive	/
9.67 Political Situation in Venezuela	Updated	Positive	/
9.68 We are Europe too	Archived (merged into new 9.43 with former 9.52)	Positive	/
9.69 Europe stands with Ukraine: Stop the Russian war	Updated	Positive	/
9.70 Recognition of the Genocide of the Ukrainian People by the Russian Federation	Updated	Positive	/
9.71 In solidarity with the Iranian women for freedom	Kept	Positive	/



<p>9.72 Urgency resolution on the missile hit on Polish soil and citizens</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Resolution: Positive</p> <p>Oral amendment on the last bullet point of the resolution.</p> <p>There is no recommendation from the working group. The point stays open. An amendment will be submitted by JD at the Autumn Congress. AMD 9 is therefore not decided, it goes to Congress.</p>	<p>Maarten Tollenaar (JD) on the last bullet point of the resolution on ;the media to place the full responsibility for wide-spread consequences of Russian aggression’: I am not sure if we as LYMEC want to call the media to take specific decisions. It is not liberal to do it.</p> <p>Olena Dudko (EYU): I agree with Maarten Tollenaar (JD). This wording is not liberal enough. We can bring it to Congress or delete it for now.</p> <p>Maarten Tollenaar (JD): We will propose an amendment for the next Congress.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer): JD can introduce an amendment for deletion of the last bullet point. We can leave this open for discussion at the next Congress.</p> <p>Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer) asks if anyone wants to speak on the resolution as updated.</p> <p>No one takes the floor. The resolution has a positive recommendation from the working group.</p>
<p>9.73 Nuclear Terrorism Prevention in Europe</p>	<p>Kept</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>
<p>9.74 Recognizing the Russian Federation as a Terrorist State</p>	<p>Updated</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>
<p>9.75 Escalation in the Eastern Mediterranean</p>	<p>Kept</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>/</p>



9.76 Stop Russian imperialism in Eastern Europe	Kept	Positive	/
9.77 Towards Stricter Screening of Foreign Direct Investments Into Critical EU Infrastructure	Kept	Positive	/
9.78 Closing Putin's gates means welcoming allies - Extending an invitation to Georgia	Kept	Positive	/

Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer):

- ❖ There are no more comments.
- ❖ **Laia Comerma (LYMEC Policy Officer)** closes the session on the Policy Book Renewal. She will come up with some solutions for the unclear resolutions, so as to have a formal vote on them at the next Congress in Riga.
- ❖ She thanks everyone for participating. Each point that was discussed today can be reopened at the next Congress. It is participants' right to do so, even if the scope of the Digital Assembly is to streamline this process.
- ❖ A special thank you to those who participated in **the very last** Working Group of the Policy Book renewal!

Dan-Aria Sucuri (LYMEC President):

- ❖ Before we see each other in Riga, I would like to remind you that nominations are open to contribute to the LYMEC Working Group on the delegation system. It is important to have a balance and adequate representation in this Working Group, so please let us know as soon as possible. The deadline for nominations is 8 September 2023.
- ❖ The deadline to apply for the Project Fund event - Ethical Digitalisation - is on 12 September 2023.
- ❖ As we do not have time to proceed to the Q&A session with the LYMEC Bureau, we will move it to the Autumn Congress. If you have urgent questions for the Bureau, you can email them to us.
- ❖ Thank you everyone for the great work and for joining the Digital Assembly today!