

## EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARY WEEK 2019 - A SUCCESS

European Parliamentary Week 2019, the biggest annual conference co-organised by the European Parliament and the Romanian Presidency, took place on 18-19 February 2019. The conference brought together 128 Parliamentarians from 27 Member States, 5 candidate countries and Norway and Switzerland.

This was the eight edition of this event and the last one for this legislature.

On 18 February, **the opening plenary session of the European Semester Conference** provided an opportunity to exchange information on best practices in implementing the Semester cycle, to strengthen cooperation and take stock of the national experiences of the framework in order to scrutinise the actions of the executives at national and European levels within the European Semester cycle.

The key-addresses by the Vice-President of the European Commission and Commissioner for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets, Valdis Dombrovskis, and the Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, Marianne Thyssen, opened an interesting debate with the participation of the Members from the national Parliaments and the European Parliament.

This was followed-up by three parallel Interparliamentary Committee Meetings. They tackled a number of topics like the Banking Union, taxation and anti-money laundering, new forms of employment, addressing the issue of the people with disabilities, the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and new own resources.

19 February, was dedicated to **the Interparliamentary Conference on Stability, Economic Coordination and Governance in the European Union**. Debates and exchange of information took place in two panels aiming to strengthen cooperation between national Parliaments and the European Parliament. The Conference also contributed to ensuring democratic accountability in the area of economic governance and budgetary policy in the EU, particularly in the European Monetary Union, taking into account the social dimension and without prejudice to the competences of national Parliaments and the European Parliament.

During the morning session on *Convergence, stabilisation and cohesion in EMU: what role for the MFF?* particular importance was given to the new EU programmes to support investment and access to finance within the new MFF, the eventual budget for the euro area and the proposal to create the European Monetary Fund. The engaged exchange between the Members from the national Parliaments and the EP followed the introductory remarks given by the Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources, Günther Oettinger.

The twentieth anniversary of the Euro, *Euro@20*, was celebrated in the presence of high-level guests. President of Eurogroup, Mário Centeno, Vice-President of the European Central Bank Luis de Guindos and Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs, Taxation and Customs, Pierre Moscovici addressed the conference. The Euro is one of the biggest successes of EU integration and against the odds, the single currency is a condition for preserving and restoring monetary sovereignty through shared sovereignty.

The lively debate was concluded by the intervention by EP President Antonio Tajani in which he confirmed that one of his priorities is to bring EU policies and institutions closer to our citizens and the EU national Parliaments play a key role in reaching this goal. He reiterated that the European Parliament and EU national Parliaments must be more involved in the decision-making process, also by coordinating better with each other. This is the aim of the European Parliamentary Week. Only by working together, we can respond concretely to citizens' priorities.

The afternoon session covered the **investment priorities for the post-2020 period**. The President of the European Investment Bank, Werner Hoyer gave the introductory speech followed by the intervention of the Member of the European Court of Auditors, Annemie Turtelboom and the Members from the national Parliaments and the EP.

The Romanian Presidency co-chaired all the sessions with brio and reminded the importance of the cohesion as a common European value.

All the debates contributed to the aim that the national and European Parliaments Members work more closely together on issues related to the European Semester. All the speakers insisted on the same priorities: concluding the banking union, particularly finalising the European deposit and insurance system, setting up a common budget for the Eurozone to stabilise economies in harder times, amending the European Stability Mechanism, and building more democratic accountability.

The event was organised by the Legislative Dialogue Unit in the Directorate for Relations with national Parliaments alongside with the secretariats of the Economic and Monetary Affairs, Employment and Social Affairs and Budgets committees, Secretariats of the Economic and Monetary Affairs, Employment and Social Affairs and Budgets Committees, the Economic Governance Support Unit and the Directorate-General for Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences.