



Ressort: Politik

## The 9th Session of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly

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The 9th Ordinary Session of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly is taking place from Monday 19 April 2021 to Tuesday 20 April 2021 in Brussels by remote participation.

The Neighbourhood Policy of the European Union, including both Eastern and Southern neighbours, was launched in 2003-04 by the European Commission.

The idea to create an inter-parliamentary forum with the Eastern Neighbours

(Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) came up in 2006 in the European Parliament. The aims of establishing such a forum were to promote multilateral parliamentary dialogue, people-to-people contacts (in particular for young people), and EU values on the functioning of democracy. The purpose was also to deal with subjects like energy, trade, the environment, and convergence with EU laws and standards. Within the framework of the Neighbourhood Policy of the European Union the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly was established on 3 May 2011 in Brussels, when the Presidents (or their representatives) of the Armenian, Azerbaijani, Georgian, Moldovan, Ukrainian and European Parliaments signed the Assembly's Constitutive Act.

The mission of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly is to promote the conditions necessary to accelerate political association and further economic integration between the EU and the Eastern European Partners, as well as to strengthen cooperation within the region and between the region and the EU. The multilateral Assembly contributes to strengthening, developing, and increasing the visibility of the Eastern Partnership. Members of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly will meet remotely for the 9th Ordinary Session on Tuesday, 20 April.

The Assembly is comprised of 60 MEPs and 10 members each of the participating parliaments of the Eastern European Partners (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). Representatives of the democratic forces of Belarus will also be invited to attend the session as observers.

European Parliament President David Sassoli will open the session on Tuesday. The meetings will be co-chaired by MEP Andrius Kubilius (EPP, Lithuania) and Maka Botchorishvili, Member of Parliament of Georgia.

Other prominent participants expected to address the Assembly include EU Commissioner for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi (recorded message), Belarusian opposition leader Sviatlana Tsikhanouskaya,

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Christa Schweng, President of the European Economic and Social Committee, the Mayor of Gdansk Aleksandra Dulkiewicz, as well as the parliamentary speakers from all Euronest partner countries. Before the opening session on 20 April, several meetings of the different Euronest Committees and Working Groups will take place, on a wide range of subjects. The key debate of the overall session will be on “recovery, resilience and democratisation perspectives for a post COVID-19 Eastern Partnership”.

The volatile situation in Belarus will also feature on the agenda. In addition to the address by Ms Tsikhanouskaya and the discussion that will follow, the Chair of the European Parliament’s delegation for relations with Belarus, Robert Biedron (S&D, Poland), will also brief the Assembly on December 2020’s Parliament Fact-Finding Mission to the country and the follow-up that has taken place since then. In the days leading up to the meetings, the participants have voted on resolutions covering political affairs, economic integration, energy security and social matters, which participants will then present during the gathering.

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