

Top Priorities of Slovakia's MEPs



The 24th of May 2014 was the date of the third European elections in Slovakia. Thirteen elected MEPs from Slovakia already took their seats in the European Parliament among their 738 colleagues from the remaining 27 Member States for a five-year period.

Sadly, Slovakia has once again recorded the lowest voter turnout in the EU with 13.05%,

which raises questions about the perceived importance of the European Parliament by

the general public in Slovakia. One of the reasons behind this situation is a lack of information

about the Slovak MEPs activities. That is why we've decided to ask the newly-elected thirteen about their priorities. All thirteen MEPs were approached with the same question; we present the answers of those who replied below.



Monika Flašíková Beňová

I will try to build on the activity from the previous legislative term, when I was among the most active MEPs. Focus will be on policies supporting sustainable economic growth and increasing the employment level. Creation of new jobs can help to eliminate huge social inequalities, which are one of the reasons causing the rise of extremism in EU. Much focus must be put on youth employment. I am going to support investments necessary for the creation of effective tools regarding the development of skills, education and training of youth. Raising competitiveness is impossible without reindustrialization. Focus must be placed on the development of innovative economies. Pressure on the greater effectiveness of European institutions will be of equal importance. That is linked to the transparency of public procurement, which is one of the most important tools for sustainable growth. My priorities will also include greater protection of consumer rights and deepening of gender equality, for example, according to remuneration.



Pál Csáky

As a newly-elected Member of the European Parliament, I appreciate the opportunity to share with you my political priorities for the next five years, which I would like to divide into three main areas:

- My political group, the European People's Party, is still the main driving force of the European Parliament and I will support its efforts towards a better and stronger Europe mainly through my work in the LIBE and PETI committees, in the latter as a vice-chair;
- I was elected by the citizens of Slovakia and I strongly believe that we need to address the low participation rate of voters by increasing the interest of people in common European issues. Slovakia will hold the EU Council Presidency for the first time in 2016. This will be a unique opportunity to bring Europe closer to Slovak citizens;
- Finally, my main goal is to fight for strengthening the rights of people belonging to traditional national minorities at the European level. The struggles of about 50 million EU citizens have to be adequately addressed. Together with my colleagues I hope to find solutions through the power of the EU legislation in order to preserve European diversity and national identity.



Eduard Kukan

The major tasks at stake in this term of the European parliament will be defining post-crisis internal developments and upholding EU's role on the global scene. Slovakia has a strong interest in both which I want to stand up for. Many challenges lie ahead especially in our relations with external partners, those in our close neighborhood but also in the transatlantic affairs. In these areas I will focus on our eastern partners, processes related to integration of Western Balkans but also on our relations with the United States. Issues such as security, including energy security, trade and support for investments, will be high on my agenda. During this mandate, I will also work on improvements of living conditions of specific groups in Slovakia. My attention as a member of the Employment Committee will be to support active aging, anti-discrimination policies and working opportunities for people over 50.



József Nagy

The protection of the rights of the national minorities, supporting families, strengthening the rule of law, the impartiality of the judiciary, independence of the media, and the promotion of intergenerational solidarity are my key priorities in the European Parliament, where I will work in the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee. I do believe in a strong Europe where Member States on equal footing decide on the common path to go on. Solidarity should be the guiding principle in our actions. Europe should not be over-regulated, but simplified so that all its citizens feel at home. Fighting unemployment is a MUST and our efforts should focus on strengthening growth, so that average citizens in all Member States benefit from our actions. I will devote all my energies to fight extremism in the EU. Inter-ethnic tensions do not serve the interests of the EU, reconciliation; between the nations is most important. Therefore I will initiate a cross-party working group in the EP on this topic.



Ivan Štefanec

Firstly, as a member of the Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection, I would like to work on the removal of barriers on the EU's internal market and the completion of the internal market for services. I will also support the creation of the digital single market for consumers and businesses. Moreover, my efforts will also seek to simplify the working environment and reduce the administrative burdens and bureaucracy.

Secondly, as a substitute in the Committee on Budgets, I will aim on the transfer of the budget structures in the direction of the investments for future with the focus on the projects in the area of science, research and innovation.

Overall, I would like to assess the legislative proposals according to their contribution to the job creation, promotion of economic growth and competitiveness. I will also participate in the work targeting the relations with the USA specifically on TTIP and issues concerning Ukraine.