

# EU guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under financing operations supporting investment projects outside the Union: Belarus

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The European Parliament **rejected two motions for resolutions on the Commission delegated decision of 15 April 2016** amending Annex III to Decision No 466/2014/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council granting an EU guarantee to the European Investment Bank against losses under financing operations supporting investment projects outside the Union, as regards Belarus. Qualified majority was needed for the adoption of the motions for resolutions.

To recall, the Commission delegated decision seeks to amend Annex III to [Decision No 466/2014/EU](#) by including Belarus to the list of eligible countries for EIB financing operations covered by an EU guarantee.

- **The first draft resolution** (tabled on behalf of EFDD group, and rejected by 108 votes to 428, with 158 abstentions) called on Parliament to object to the delegated Commission decision on the ground that the **delegated decision does not take properly into consideration all the aspects relating to respect for human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy** in Belarus.

The Member who initiated the draft resolution is particularly critical of the fact that Belarus remains a centralised and autocratic state, tightly controlled by the President. President Lukashenko was re-elected on 11 October 2015 with 83.5 % of the vote, but significant problems, particularly during counting and tabulation, undermined the integrity of the elections.

The draft resolution also stressed that: (i) despite some positive actions taken since August 2015, human rights violations are still rampant and systematic; (ii) journalists working for independent media or working for foreign media without accreditation are often detained, prosecuted and fined; (iii) for decades the opposition has been entirely absent from the parliament; (iv) Belarus remains the only country in Europe where the death penalty is applied.

- **The second draft resolution** (tabled on behalf of the ECR, ALDE and Greens/EFA, and rejected by 278 votes to 129, with 285 abstentions) called on Parliament to object to the delegated Commission decision, considering that it would be **inappropriate and premature to grant an EU guarantee at this stage** taking the view that the forthcoming general elections on 11 September 2016 represent an opportunity for Belarus to end its long-standing practice of fraudulent elections, and constitute a decisive test with which to measure the genuine will of the Belarusian authorities to reconcile with their own citizens and to engage constructively with the EU.

Members who initiated the draft resolution stressed that since the decision to lift sanctions the overall human rights situation in the country has shown only a very limited improvement. The motion for a resolution:

- called on the European External Action Service to report to Parliament on the conduct and outcome of the elections on 11 September 2016, stressing that only after these elections will Parliament be in a position to assess any new delegated act on the matter;

- called on the Commission to ensure that an EU guarantee to the European Investment Bank could not be used to finance the Ostrovets nuclear power plant, and to assess whether such a guarantee is in compliance with the EU sanctions imposed on the Russian Federation.