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Greens/EFA Flash - October

Priorities of the Greens/EFA group for the week 8-12 October

EU air pollution rules

Environment Committee vote, 9 October

The Environment Committee will vote on an important legislative report on revising EU rules for air quality. Despite the severe health problems and fatalities caused directly and indirectly by air pollution, the European Parliament voted to weaken the existing air quality rules in its first reading last year, adopting limit values for key pollutants that fall far short of the limits recommended by the World Health Organisation. The Greens are hoping the proposal will be considerably strengthened in second reading.

Soil protection

Environment Committee vote, 9 October

Another crucial vote will take place in the Environment Committee on proposed legislation on soil protection. Given the serious nature of soil degradation across Europe, EU legislation to tackle the problem is essential. As regards industrial contamination of lands, differing standards create distortions of competition between companies in different Member States. Soil quality and its degradation also affects greenhouse gas absorbtion/release, yet EPP-ED MEPs are seeking to reject the whole proposal. Green MEPs will be seeking to ensure an already weak Commission proposal is not watered-down to the point that it is rendered redundant.

Crunch-time for the reform treaty

Plenary debate, 10 October

With the forthcoming informal Council tasked with forging an agreement on the reform treaty, Green MEPs welcome the opportunity to set out key priorities to the Council in advance. There is a large degree of consensus on limiting any changes from the already agreed constitutional treaty. One important goal of this treaty reform from the outset was to make the existing treaties more coherent, workable and relevant. Carving up the treaty with opt-outs and exemptions would have exactly the opposite effect and the Council must resist attempts to this end.

Feminicides and the EU's role

Debate, 10 October; vote, 11 October

Thousands of women have been murdered in Central America and Mexico over the past decade alone, many of them following torture and sexual abuse. The crimes are committed with impunity, the murderers are often not detained and the efforts to resolve the cases by the authorities are insufficient. Green rapporteur **Raül Romeva** calls on the EU to play an active role in ensuring the prevention and proper punishment of feminicides, such as by supporting the restructuring of judicial systems and the protection of victims and their families, as well as integrating the phenomenon into the political dialogue of its Association Agreements with these countries.
*Press conference at 13.00 on Thursday, 11 October, with **Raül Romeva**.*

Cigaratte smuggling

Debate, 10 October; vote, 11 October

The European Parliament will debate and vote on a report on cigarette smuggling in the EU by Green MEP Bart Staes. Following the relative success of the EU's agreement with cigarette producer Philip Morris on import controls in combatting smuggling, this report calls for similar agreements to be negotiated with other producers.

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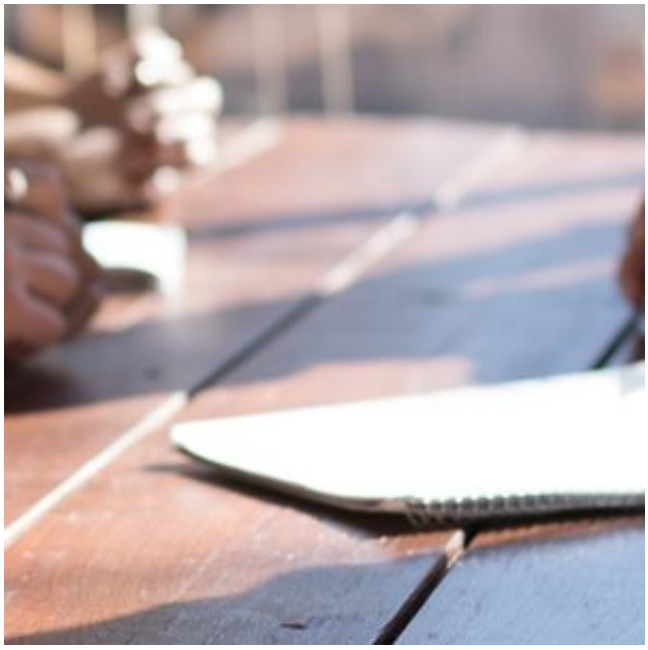
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