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A Greens/EFA take on the plenary week

Plenary week, 17-19 June 2020

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Anti-racism protests following the death of George Floyd

Debate Wednesday, vote Friday

The European Parliament adopted Friday a resolution on the anti-racism protests following the killing of George Floyd. The cross-group resolution, which the Greens/EFA Group pushed for, condemns the killing of George Floyd and the use of force against Black Lives Matter protesters in the US and EU. It also calls

for the EU institutions to take determined steps to end structural racism and discrimination in Europe and provides some concrete recommendations on how to move forward, such as creating an EU Code of Police Ethics, to end racial and ethnic profiling used by police and law enforcement authorities.

Alice Bah Kuhnke, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the resolution and Member of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs Committee, comments:

"Racism occurs in every country in the world. Police brutality disproportionately affects black people and is something the EU, its Member States and institutions have to stamp out. The European Parliament must strongly condemn the appalling death of George Floyd and the crackdowns on peaceful US protesters and the press.

Philippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, comments:

"Let us look in the mirror: We live in a society that calls itself modern and open, but refuses to deal with its relics of colonialism, a society which condemns the murder of George Floyd and is indignant at the wall erected by Donald Trump, but turns a blind eye to the murders and horrible deaths of migrants and leaves thousands of people to be shipwrecked in the Mediterranean Sea."

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Video - Alice Bah Kuhnke
- Video – Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana
- Social media

Further information
Elisabet Matamala Mir - Advisor on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
elisabet.matamalamir@ep.europa.eu

Hong Kong

Debate Thursday, vote Friday

MEPs adopted Friday a resolution, pushed by the Greens/EFA Group, on the situation in Hong Kong, condemning the Chinese government's attempts to further undermine democracy and urgently requests all charges against peaceful protesters to be dropped. The resolution states that the Chinese Communist Party policy of abandoning the "One Country, Two Systems" approach is putting Hong Kong's autonomy at risk and fuelling tensions in the whole region, including Taiwan. The resolution also calls for setting up a UN Special Envoy on the situation in Hong Kong and calls on the EU and its Member States to consider filing a case before the International Court of Justice.

Reinhard Bütikofer, Chairman of the European Parliament's Delegation to China and Co-Chairman of the new Inter-parliamentary Alliance on China, commented:

"The imposition of the Security Law is primarily directed against the freedoms granted under the Hong Kong Basic Law and is designed to remove Hong Kong's autonomy. In doing so, Beijing is not only betraying all the promises made to the citizens of Hong Kong, but is also breaking its binding commitment under the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration. It is not enough to merely comment critically on this. The EU must also make it clear to the Chinese leadership that we will not accept this attack without consequence.

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Video - Reinhard Bütikofer on foreign policy consequences of the COVID-19 crisis and Hong Kong
- Social media
- EU Foreign Ministers must condemn Beijing's attacks on Hong Kong's autonomy

Further information:
Marta Ruiz Carnés – Adviser on International Trade
marta.ruizcarnes@ep.europa.eu

Sustainable Investment/Taxonomy

Vote Thursday

The European Parliament approved on Thursday the deal establishing a legislative framework to facilitate sustainable investment. Known as the 'EU Green taxonomy', the framework will create a common EU system in order to define what can be considered an environmentally sustainable economic activity. By doing so it should help shifting finances towards more sustainable economic activities. All financial products that claim to contribute to environmental sustainability will have to prove this claim by disclosing the share of their investments into activities that are considered sustainable. The financial sector must play its role in the green transition and taxonomy will help push them towards sustainable investments.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA MEP and rapporteur on the file for the European Parliament, comments:

"The new rules on taxonomy will help drive sustainable investments and green the financial sector. It will help push investors and companies towards a sustainable economy and prevent greenwashing in the world of sustainable investment."

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Social media
- More: Deal reached on taxonomy will support sustainable investments

Further information
Francisco Padilla - Advisor on Economic and Monetary Affairs
francisco.padilla@ep.europa.eu

Tax subcommittee

Vote Friday

MEPs voted in favour by a large majority, Friday, of establishing a new permanent subcommittee on tax. For a long time, the Greens/EFA group has been calling for the investigation of tax scandals from the past years. The new committee will cover the topics of tax fraud, tax evasion and tax avoidance, under the

ECON committee. It is vital that the Parliament will have the opportunity to look at tax issues and tax transparency, particularly now that tax revenue could be part of financing the COVID-19 Recovery Plan. Our Group welcomes the permanent nature of this subcommittee, after years of special committees (TAXE in 2015, TAX2 in 2016, TAX3 in 2018) and one inquiry committee (PANA in 2017).

Sven Giegold MEP, financial and economic policy spokesperson of the Greens/EFA group, who has long called for a subcommittee on tax, comments:

"This is a fantastic success in the fight for tax justice that comes at the right time. Large sums of money that we need to tackle the Corona crisis are trickling away in tax swamps. If the public sector spends unprecedented amounts of money today, it must also think about tomorrow's revenues. Instead of making the next generation pay for the recovery, we should put a stop to tax dodging and financial crime. The creation of a permanent subcommittee in the European Parliament is the just beginning of a new battle in the fight for tax justice in Europe.

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Social media

Further information
Catherine Olier - Advisor on Economic and Monetary Affairs
catherine.olier@ep.europa.eu

Disability Strategy

Votes on Thursday & Friday, 17 June (MEPs already debated on 17 December 2019)

MEPs voted this week on the EU Disability Strategy resolution, calling on the Commission to put forward a comprehensive, ambitious and long-term post-2020 European Disability Strategy. On our Group's initiative, the resolution urges the Commission to come up with a package of binding targets, deadlines and monitoring for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the EU Member States. This includes the topics like independent living, housing, employment, freedom of movement as well as an evaluation of human rights violations experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our Group welcomes the text and the inclusion of our amendments on the impact of Covid19 on the disability community. The Commission will present its proposal within the next year.

- Text adopted
- Video - Katrin Langensiepen

Further information
Philine Scholze - Advisor on Employment & Social Affairs
philine.scholze@ep.europa.eu

Animal Transport Inquiry Committee

Vote Friday

Following pressure from the Greens/EFA group, MEPs voted in favour, Friday, of setting up a committee of inquiry into animal transport. It will look at irregularities in animal transport across the EU, given allegations of serious and systematic violations of the regulation on the protection of animals during transport. Within the European Union, pigs, cows and other animals are often transported in confined spaces far beyond the permitted times, the water and food supply is inadequate and rules on temperatures and rest periods are not observed. During the previous mandate, the Conference of Presidents of the European Parliament had blocked the opening up of an inquiry committee.

Tilly Metz MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Agricultural Committee and one of the initiators of the inquiry committee, comments:

"Cruelty to animals, blatant violations of animal welfare rules, and the responsibility of the European Commission and EU governments must be thoroughly investigated. Citizens can no longer tolerate the outrageous horrors on animal transports across the European Union and to third countries."

- Text adopted
- Press release – quote from Martin Häusling
- Press release – quote from Thomas Waitz and Sarah Wiener
- Video – Tilly Metz and Caroline Roose
- Social media
- More: Greens/EFA take European Parliament to court over animal welfare conditions

Further information
Harriet Clayton - Advisor on Agriculture and Rural Development
harriet.clayton@ep.europa.eu

Budgetary Control report into the investigation against the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic on the misuse of EU funds and potential conflicts of interest

Vote Friday

On Friday, the Parliament voted on the Budget Control committee report into the conflicts of interest around Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš, following a fact-finding mission in February. The report finds there is no clear mechanism in place in Czechia to prevent and address situations which may objectively be perceived as conflict of interests. Now, measures must be taken to address the conflicts of interest around Andrej Babiš. The Greens/EFA group are calling on the Council to set out how it intends to avoid a conflict of interest around the table in the negotiations on the MFF.

Viola von Cramon MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the resolution and Member of the Budgetary Control Committee, commented:

"This report lays bare the problems across the EU in stopping conflicts of interest from existing at the highest levels of government. The case of Andrej Babiš exposes the gaps in the payment system for EU funding: The shared management system has proven that there is a lack of transparency that cannot be tackled under the current provisions. We need revised rules that ensure full transparency about who the final beneficiaries of subsidies are."

Mikuláš Peksa, Greens/EFA and Pirate Party MEP who attending the mission to Czechia and Member of the Budgetary Control Committee, comments:

"On the mission to Czechia we found that there is no effective mechanism to mitigate potential conflicts of interest, not for Mr Babiš or other officials. However, the problem is not just limited to the Czech Republic. We need to ensure that in all EU countries, EU money cannot be used by those in power to enrich themselves."

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Social media
- More: Parliament report: no mechanism to address conflict of interest in Czechia

Further information
Robert Godina - Advisor on Budgetary Control
robert.godina@ep.europa.eu

Future of Europe

Debate Wednesday, vote Thursday

MEPs adopted by a large majority, Thursday, a resolution on the Conference on the Future of Europe. The Conference on the Future of Europe should lead to a participatory reform process aimed at improving the democracy and citizen participation in the European project. Despite the Parliament already having voted to launch the process for setting up the Conference, the Council has yet to take the next steps. The Parliament resolution this week aims to put the Conference back on the agenda for the Covid recovery period.

- Text adopted
- Video - Daniel Freund
- Social media
- European Parliament resolution on the European Parliament's position on the Conference on the Future of Europe
- Conference on the Future of Europe - quote from Daniel Freund

Further information
Mélanie Vogel - Advisor on constitutional affairs
melanie.vogel@ep.europa.eu

Recovery/MFF

Votes Thursday and Friday, Guidelines for the 2021 Budget - Section III

The European Parliament voted this week on its guidelines for the 2021 EU budget. Following a push from the Greens/EFA group, this is the first time that the European Parliament has called for 30% spending on

climate and 10% on biodiversity to match the needs of the climate emergency. It is a key chance for the Parliament to give greater emphasis on climate spending then what is currently envisaged by the Commission's proposal of May 2020. The Corona crisis cannot undermine our climate ambitions but should be used as a catalyst for the transition. This vote sends a clear political signal on the European Parliament's raised political ambition in terms of climate in both the MFF and Recovery Package for the upcoming negotiations.

- Text adopted
- More: The Greens/EFA Financial Recovery Plan

Further information
Roccu Garoby - Advisor on Budget and Budgetary Control
roccu.garoby@ep.europa.eu

Land grabbing and deforestation in the Amazonas

Commission statement and debate Friday

The European Parliament held a debate, Friday, on land grabbing and deforestation in the Amazonas. The Greens/EFA group had pushed for a debate on deforestation and land grabbing in the Amazon region, following Brazilian proposed law PL-2633/20 which would legalise past land grabbing; the dismantling of the Brazilian legal framework to fight deforestation and protect indigenous people pursued by the Bolsonaro administration; and the constant increase of deforestation rates in the Brazilian Amazon ahead of the fire season. Ratification of the EU-Mercosur trade deal is still on the agenda of the German Council Presidency. It would encourage large scale environmental and social damages for the sake of export agriculture. The Greens/EFA group are calling for a halt to deforestation, protection for forest communities and for a stop to the EU-Mercosur ratification process.

- Video - Anna Cavizzini
- Video – Saskia Bricmont
- Video – Tilly Metz
- Video – Caroline Roose
- Video – Martin Hausling
- Video – Thomas Waitz
- Video – Pär Holmgren

Further information
Gaby Küppers - Advisor on External Economic Relations and WTO
gabriele.kueppers@ep.europa.eu

Brexit

Debate Wednesday, vote Thursday

MEPs voted Thursday on a resolution on recommendations on the negotiations for a new partnership with

the UK. The Greens/EFA group want the EU to build the strongest possible relationship with the UK based on common values and a level playing field, aiming to a dynamic alignment, in order to avoid any kind of dumping and lowering of standards over time. The resolution deplores the lack of political will from the UK government to agree on an ambitious and comprehensive partnership that builds on the mutually agreed Political declaration. The resolution also underlines the importance of stepping up contingency measures well ahead of the end of the transition period, especially in case of a no-deal scenario.

The Greens/EFA MEPs, **Sergey Lagodinsky** (AFET) and **Heidi Hautala** (INTA), are shadow rapporteurs on the resolution. **Philippe Lamberts** is the Greens/EFA Member of the UK Coordination Group.

- Text adopted
- Video - Heidi Hautala
- Video - Sergey Lagodinsky
- Social media

Further information:
Marta Ruiz Carnés – Adviser on International Trade
marta.ruizcarnes@ep.europa.eu

Eastern Partnership

Summit Thursday

The EaP Summit was a key opportunity to kick off the discussion on the future of the Eastern Partnership. The Commission's updated agenda towards the EaP focuses on the EaP countries' resilience in terms of their economies, the rule of law and security, environment, digital transformation, and societies. However, the EU must go beyond this and devise a sustainable and credible strategy for long-term engagement, focusing on not only stabilisation and market-access but more so on democratisation and people's well-being, with ambitious and transformational goals. We are ready to contribute to the discussion in the coming months.

Ahead of the summit MEPs in the Greens/EFA Foreign Affairs Working Group published their position paper: "The Eastern Partnership: Future Made to Measure"

- Social media

Further information
Juliane Schmidt - Advisor on Foreign Affairs
juliane.schmidt@ep.europa.eu

European Council

Friday

This Friday, European leaders will meet to discuss the COVID-19 recovery fund and a new EU long term budget. The Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament call on the heads of state and governments to find an agreement on the Commission's proposals as a first step towards a European economic recovery plan founded on solidarity, and further calls for payments to be clearly linked to Green Deal projects and full respect for the rule of law.

Ska Keller MEP, commented on the upcoming European Council:

"This EUCO should be used by heads of state and government to over-fulfil everybody's expectations and in fact make real progress on the recovery plan. It has been months of haggling and delaying so far. What we need to see is a fast, decisive and courageous action now. Everybody knows that to mitigate the economic impact of the crisis, the EU needs to have and provide substantial funds."

Philippe Lamberts MEP, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, added:

"This crisis requires real action and real solutions not just talk. We have good proposals on the table, from the Parliament and from the Commission and now it's time for the Member States to do their part. While the numbers proposed in the Commission's recovery plan don't go as far as what MEPs called for, it's the bare minimum that Members States should sign up to, in order to start the recovery."

- Press release
- Video - Ska Keller
- European Commission seizes the momentum of the Franco-German initiative

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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- PRC national security law for Hong Kong and the need for the EU to defend Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy
- Transport and tourism

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 10 July 2020

Recommended

Press release

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The World must triple efforts to save nature

29.10.2026

Press release

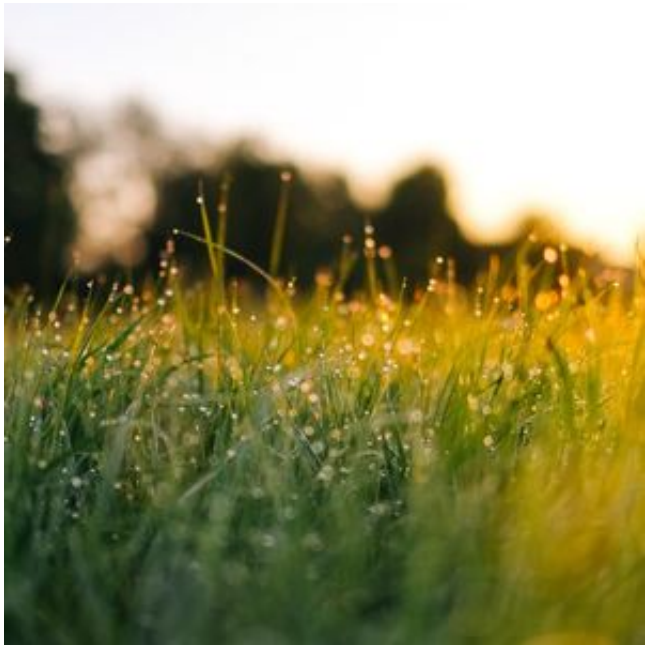
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[Methane Regulation: European Parliament capitulates to…]

22.10.2026

Press release



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