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A Greens/EFA take on the plenary week

13-17 January 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **European Green Deal**
 - **Sustainable Investment Plan, Just Transition Fund, Roadmap on Social Europe**
 - **Council hearings on the rule of Law in Hungary and Poland**
 - **Czech PM Andrej Babiš' conflicts of interest**
 - **Australia bushfires**
 - **Convention on biodiversity**
 - **Housing First**
 - **Other Greens/EFA motions for resolution**
-

European Green Deal Resolution

Vote Wednesday 15 January

The European Parliament adopted Wednesday a cross-party resolution on the European Green Deal, initiated by the Greens/EFA group. The Commission's proposal is a good starting point, but we succeeded in including demands for more biodiversity protection, more climate financing and a more social approach to tackling the climate crisis.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Vice-Chair of the Environment Committee and Greens/EFA negotiator on the resolution, commented:

"The Green Deal must be the engine for the green transition and today's vote pushes the Commission to be more ambitious.

The European Parliament is also clear that a real Green Deal needs to encompass much more than only climate and environmental protection, it must be a tool for a true social transformation that tackles inequality.

The Green Deal will only succeed if the EU and its Member States ensure that the economic system leads to equal opportunities and adequate social security for all, rather than greater wealth for the few."

The European Commission's proposal does not yet include the Common Agricultural Policy. Payments from the Just Transition Fund must be linked to binding dates for the phasing out of coal.

- [Greens/EFA motion for a resolution](#)
- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Social media](#)

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Sustainable Investment Plan, Just Transition Fund, Roadmap on Social Europe

Debate Tuesday 14 January afternoon

MEPs debated Tuesday plans on how to finance the European Green Deal. The European Commission presented its' proposals - Sustainable Investment Plan, Just Transition Fund, Roadmap on Social Europe - aimed at supporting regions affected by the transition to climate neutrality.

While we welcome the initiative of the Just Transition Fund, we regret it does not include plans for the phase out of coal.

Niklas Nienäß, Green/EFA group coordinator in the Committee on Regional Development, commented:

"The Just Transition Fund is a necessary tool to support the regions that will be affected by the move away from coal and other polluting industries, which we have long been calling for. Unfortunately, the Commission's proposal does not set a binding date for the phase-out of coal. No money should be distributed from this fund before there are clear commitments and concrete dates for the coal phase-out from Member States. Poland should sign-up to EU climate targets before being eligible to money under the Just Transition Fund."

The European Commission presented its 'Roadmap for a Social Europe' to MEPs. The proposals must go beyond merely focusing on employment, and take into account the poverty and social exclusion that threatens one in four European citizens and one in eight workers.

Kim van Sparrentak MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Social Affairs Committee, said:

"The Commission Roadmap reduces the social agenda to the issue of employment and leaves out issues such as poverty and social exclusion."

For the Greens/EFA, a just and fair European Green Deal, must be backed up by a strong social security agenda to support those most affected by the transition to a green economy.

- [Press release - Just Transition Fund](#)
- [Press release – Social Europe](#)

- [Video – Niklas Nienäß](#)
- [Video - Katrin Langensiepen](#)
- [Social media](#)

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Australia bushfires

Commission statement and debate Monday 13 January

On the initiative of the Greens/EFA group, the European Parliament held a debate Monday on the devastating bushfires in Australia and other extreme weather events driven by climate change. 2019 was the hottest year in New South Wales where the fires started; leading to the catastrophic consequences for people, animals and forests.

- [Video – Pär Holmgren](#)
 - [Social media](#)
-

Council hearings on the rule of Law in Hungary and Poland

Council and Commission statements Wednesday 15 January, vote Thursday 16 January

Council hearings on breaches of European values by the Hungarian and Polish governments were debated and voted by the Parliament. In both cases, the hearings have not yet resulted in any significant progress by both Member States. The situation has deteriorated in both Poland and Hungary since Article 7 has been triggered. The failure by the Council to make effective use of Article 7 undermines the integrity of common European values, mutual trust, and credibility of the Union as a whole.

In the resolution that was adopted, the new Chamber reiterated its positions on Hungary and Poland with more than a two third majority.

"So far the European Commission and the Parliament have initiated Article 7 and now it's time for the Council to do its part to protect the rule of law in Europe. The Council needs to move forward on serious breaches of the rule of law." declared Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, rapporteure on Hungary.

- [Video on Hungary - Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield](#)
- [Video on Poland – Terry Reintke](#)
- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release](#)

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Czech PM Andrej Babiš' conflicts of interest

Council and Commission statements Wednesday 15 January, vote in February

MEPs debated Wednesday on the reopening of the prosecution against the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic for artificially dividing a company in numerous smaller ones in order to receive EU money and potential conflicts of interest.

In December, a leaked Commission audit report confirmed that the Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš is in a conflict of interest, and may have benefited from EU funds through his company Agrofert. Final results of a second audit report into the possible misuse of EU Agriculture funds and the alleged conflict of interest of Czech Prime Minister are expected in next few months.

The Committee on Budget Control will also go on a fact-finding mission to Prague in February.

The vote on the resolution will take place during the February part-session.

- [Video – Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel](#)
- [Press release](#)

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Convention on biodiversity

Commission statement Wednesday 15 January, vote Thursday 16 January

Ahead of the biodiversity conference COP15 in Kunming, China at the end of this year, MEPs are calling to set legally binding goals to protect the planet's biodiversity, along the lines of the Paris Agreement. The European Parliament adopted a strong resolution which includes two key Greens/EFA amendments calling for 30% of land and marine areas to be protected by 2030 and for a global moratorium on gene drive. A very positive result indeed.

- [Video – Ville Niinistö](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information:

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Housing First

Commission statement Monday 13 January

Following a Greens/EFA initiative, MEPs debated Monday the Housing First project - a system that provides housing regardless of people's social or economic situation. It acts as an opportunity to fight extreme poverty and social exclusion and with that, also the discrimination homeless people experience.

Homelessness is on the rise in every country across most of Europe. The EU must act urgently, laying down a Europe-wide housing framework to ensure there are enough inclusive, energy-efficient and healthy homes throughout Europe.

- [Video - Katrin Langensiepen](#)
- [Social media](#)
- [Greens/EFA proposals on housing for all](#)

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Other Greens/EFA motions for resolution

- [Burundi, notably freedom of expression](#)
- [Nigeria, notably the recent terrorist attacks](#)
- [Situation in Venezuela](#)

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 14 February 2020

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