European Parliament Building Strasbourg © European Union 2017 - Source : EP

en

News | 18.02.2022

Debriefing of the February plenary session

14 - 18 February 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. EU-Russia relations: Challenges to European security, in particular Ukraine
2. Empowering European Youth: post-pandemic employment and social recovery
3. European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations
4. Poland & Hungary - ECJ ruling
5. Annual report on human rights and democracy

EU-RUSSIA RELATIONS: CHALLENGES TO EUROPEAN SECURITY, IN PARTICULAR UKRAINE

On Wednesday, the European Parliament debated the EU's relations with Russia and the Russian threat to Ukraine's statehood by the unseen military mobilisation on the Russian-Ukrainian and Belarus-Ukrainian border. The leaders of the largest political groups in the European Parliament issued a joint statement which expresses full solidarity to Ukraine’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. They called for immediate de-escalation, an end to Russian aggression, the withdrawal of Russian troops from the Ukrainian border and targeted sanctions against Russia in the event of a military intervention. The European Parliament voted in favour of 1.2 billion EUR in macro-financial assistance to Ukraine. It also called for a halt to the Nord Stream 2 gas project to prevent further EU dependence on Russian energy.

The Greens/EFA stand by Ukraine against Russian aggression and call for de-escalation. Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity are indisputable. The EU, US and other like-minded partners must be ready to immediately respond with tough and targeted sanctions, including sanctions against Russian banks and impeding or stopping the refinancing of Russian debt.

Sergey Lagodinsky MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on Russia and Substitute Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, comments:

“We need to see substantive and verifiable de-escalation from Moscow. Until that happens, the EU and our

allies must continue preparing tough sanctions in the event of Russian aggression. Severe measures against Russian banks and the Russian president's entourage, including the freezing of private assets abroad, and entry and residence bans, must be considered. Carrying out diplomacy with a firm hand remains the best way to prevent tensions from turning into military confrontations.

Nord Stream 2 provides the Russian president with geopolitical leverage and needs to be stopped. This is and has been the position of the European Parliament, regardless of if this conflict escalates any further or not. In the long term, we need an inventory of all strategic dependencies between the EU and Russia in order to reduce them. This applies above all, but not only, to the energy sector."

- Joint statement by the leaders of the political groups in the European Parliament
- Resolution "Situation on the Ukrainian border and in Russian-occupied territories in Ukraine" of 16 December 2021
- Plenary Speech Ska Keller
- Plenary Speech Viola Von Cramon-Taubadel
- Plenary Speech Heidi Hautala
- Plenary Speech Sergey Lagodinsky
- Plenary Speech Bronis Ropé
- Plenary Speech Markéta Gregorová
- Plenary Speech Jakop G. Dalunde
- Plenary Speech Grace O'Sullivan
- Plenary Speech Ville Niinistö
- Plenary Speech Reinhard Bütikofer
- Plenary Speech Mounir Satouri
- Plenary Speech Thomas Waitz

EMPOWERING YOUTH: POST-PANDEMIC EMPLOYMENT AND SOCIAL RECOVERY

On Thursday, MEPs voted on a resolution on Empowering Youth: post-pandemic employment and social recovery, which describes the impact that unemployment, climate change, housing insecurity and isolation have for young people's mental health.

The resolution adopted by the European Parliament condemns the practice of unpaid internships as a form of exploitation of young workers and a violation of their rights. It calls on the Commission and Member States to propose a common legal framework to ensure fair remuneration for traineeships and apprenticeships. The Greens/EFA Group has called for the EU to go even further and introduce an EU-wide ban on unpaid internships.

Kim van Sparrentak MEP, Greens/EFA Member of the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, comments:

"We can no longer tolerate a situation where young people can only afford to start their lives on the labour market if their parents support them or if they take on debt. Young people need to be taken seriously, which doesn't happen when their labour and their skills are being exploited.

"Now we call on the Commission to come out this year with a proposal for a ban on unpaid internships across Europe."

- Plenary Speech Salima Yenbou

- Plenary Speech Diana Riba i Giner
- Plenary Speech Malte Gallée
- Plenary Speech Kim Van Sparrentak
- Plenary Speech Kira Marie Peter-Hansen
- Ban unpaid internships - Greens/EFA
- This year has to be the year that we end unpaid internships and traineeships in
- Europe
- Call to action by MEP Diana Riba i Giner

POLAND AND HUNGARY - ECJ RULING

The European Court of Justice has rejected an action for the annulment of the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation brought by the Polish and Hungarian governments. The rejection by the court on Wednesday reaffirms that the mechanism is in line with EU law. There is now an urgent need for the Commission to finally activate this tool.

The Greens/EFA Group has repeatedly called for the Commission to trigger the mechanism for breaches against the rule of law. Our Group pushed for the Parliament to take the Commission to court over its inaction on the Conditionality Mechanism. Wednesday's ruling will require the Commission to set out its next steps in the ongoing rule of law crisis, including for the approval of Next Generation EU national plans for Poland and Hungary.

Terry Reintke, Greens/EFA MEP, shadow rapporteur for the Article 7 procedure for Poland and European Parliament rapporteur on the Annual Rule of Law report for 2021, comments:

"We have all the tools, what is lacking is the courage and will from the Commission to take the rule of law crisis seriously. If the Commission tolerates member states trampling on the rule of law and fundamental rights, the very foundation of European democracy will erode. Unless the Commission finally acts decisively against the rule of law crisis, it will jeopardise the entire European Union project."

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Greens/EFA MEP and European Parliament rapporteur on the situation in Hungary, comments:

"Democracy has come close to a breaking point in countries like Hungary and Poland because of this inaction. So long as the Commission refuses to act, autocratic governments will continue their disastrous project at the expense of their own citizens."

- Plenary Speech Terry Reintke
- Plenary Speech Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield
- Plenary Speech Daniel Freund
- Plenary Speech Alexandra Geese
- Plenary Speech Sylwia Spurek
- Plenary Speech Sergey Lagodinsky
- Plenary Speech Mikuláš Peksa
- Plenary Speech Alice Kuhnke

REPORT ON THE STATUTE FOR EUROPEAN CROSS-BORDER

ASSOCIATIONS AND NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS

Members of the European Parliament have voted by a large majority to support cross-border non-profit organisations in a report by Greens/EFA MEP, **Sergey Lagodinsky**. The report calls for EU-wide measures to safeguard civil society organisations at the Member State and EU level. This includes better legal recognition for nonprofits, supporting minimum standards and freedom of association and speech, which is increasingly under threat in Europe.

Sergey Lagodinsky, Greens/EFA MEP and European Parliament rapporteur on the report on a statute for European cross-border associations and non-profit organisations, comments:

"The EU is not just a marketplace, but a place of democracy and democracy needs a strong and vibrant European civil society. But NGOs and nonprofit organisations still lack safeguards for their work. We need to give EU citizens the opportunity to join forces and found European associations across national borders. We want to ensure minimum standards for non-profit foundations and associations to protect against against discrimination and undue pressure from public authorities or anti-democratic actors.

We urgently need to introduce a pan-European definition of what constitutes the public good, in order to facilitate and defend the work of civil society across European borders."

- Plenary Speech Sergey Lagodinsky Rapporteur

ANNUAL REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

On Tuesday, the European Parliament adopted its annual report on human rights and democracy. This report comments on the global state of human rights and the EU's human rights policy. It looks at different thematic areas, like freedom of expression, business and human rights, and women's rights.

The Greens/EFA Group contributed many key points, particularly on the issues of human rights defenders, civil society, ecocide and environmental rights, and spyware (the report calls on the EU to promote a global moratorium on the use, sale and transfer of such software). A strong majority of MEPs voted in favour of the report.

- Human rights and democracy in the world – annual report 2021
- Plenary Speech Jordi Solé
- Plenary Speech Hannah Neumann

MORE

Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION on empowering European youth: post-pandemic employment and social recovery

---

Keep in touch. Follow us.

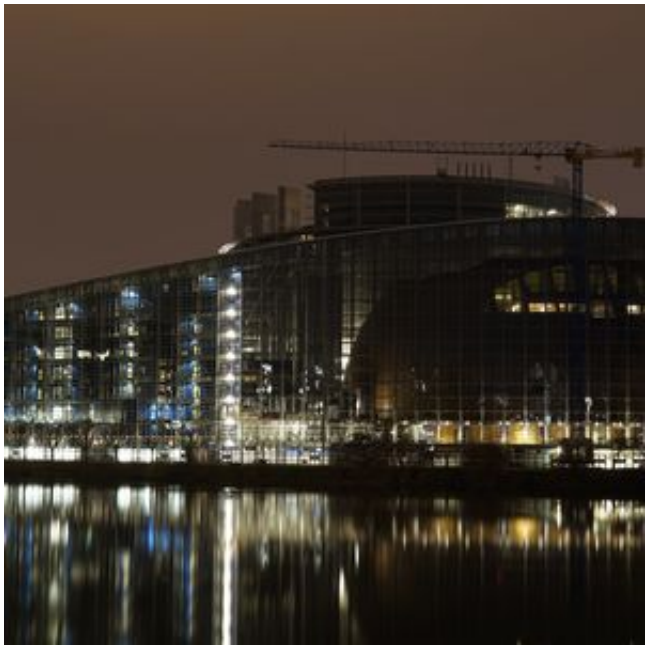
- www.greens-efa.eu
- https://www.instagram.com/greensefa/
- http://twitter.com/GreensEFA
- http://www.facebook.com/greensefa

Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 11 March 2022

Recommended

News

Dromm CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



PLENARY FLASH: Greens/EFA Priorities 23 to 26 Novembe…

20.11.2026

Press release

©jonathan-marchal



Tilly METZ elected European Parliament Vice-President

12.11.2026

Press release



[Ukrainian children in Russia: Parliament to call for u…]

11.11.2026

Press release



[Greens/EFA in Vilnius: Lithuanian Presidency must lead…]

05.11.2026

Contact person



Katy Cadwallader

Human Resources Officer



Jeroen Steeman

Community manager

Please share

- E-Mail