© European Union 2017 - Source : EP

en

News | 21.01.2022

Debriefing of the January plenary session

17 - 22 January 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Election of the European Parliament President
2. Digital Services Act
3. Animal Transport: Final Vote
4. Situation in Kazakhstan
5. Presentation of the programme of French presidency
6. More

THE ELECTION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT PRESIDENT

On Tuesday, Roberta Metsola was elected as the President of the European Parliament. She is the third woman in the Parliament's history to be elected President and the first one in over 20 years. The Green/EFA Group was also proud to run our own candidate, Alice Bah Kuhnke, who received 101 votes from MEPs across the house. Alice is a Swedish Green MEP and has been a Member of the European Parliament since 2019. She is a Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group, as well as a Member of the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, and Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committees. She ran a campaign based on the vision of a diverse, feminist, sustainable and democratic European Parliament.

The Parliament also elected the Vice Presidents and the Quaestors. Our MEP **Heidi Hautala** was elected as Vice-President and our MEP **Marcel Kolaja** was elected as Quaestor.

Ska Keller MEP, co-President of the Greens/EFA Group, comments:

"We congratulate Roberta Metsola on her election as President of the European Parliament, wish her the best in this challenging task ahead and offer our constructive cooperation. We will judge the new President by how she delivers for citizens and represents the whole Parliament. We need the Parliament to challenge the Commission and Council when necessary, to lead as a co-legislator and to take courageous steps for the climate and the path to a sustainable economy.

"We congratulate our wonderful candidate Alice Bah Kuhnke on a successful campaign and a very powerful introductory speech. A significant number of MEPs, including from other political groups, would have liked to see Alice Bah Kuhnke as President of the European Parliament, highlighting the need for progressive forces to work together."

Jordi Solé MEP, EFA Group President said:

"I would like to congratulate Roberta Metsola on her recent appointment as EP President. I hope she will honour David Sassoli's legacy by enduring pro-European parliamentary democracy."

"And I also hope that, as she comes from a small Member State, she will work to build a European Union of peoples and not only of states, an EU and EP that protect and cherish diversity, also when it comes to the use of languages."

- Plenary Speech Philippe Lamberts
- Plenary Speech Alice Bah Kuhnke
- Greens/EFA congratulate Roberta Metsola and offer constructive criticism
- EFA Group congratulates Roberta Metsola
- Greens/EFA nominate Alice Bah Kuhnke for European Parliament President

---

DIGITAL SERVICES ACT

On Thursday, the European Parliament took its final vote on the Digital Services Act (DSA). The Greens/EFA Group have long campaigned for a fairer internet with less power in the hands of a few tech giants. The DSA is the EU's answer to the excessive power of a few large online platforms (such as Facebook, Google, Apple, Amazon and Microsoft). The DSA will become the new framework for online services for the EU. It is expected to set a global standard for dealing with hate and hate speech, disinformation, platform oversight, reporting procedures and surveillance-based advertising.

For the first time, scientists and NGOs will have the legal right to gain insight into data from major platforms such as Google, Facebook, whose algorithms and systems influence public opinion and frequently promote extremist content and conspiracy theories. Users will have clearly defined rights against arbitrary take-downs and account suspensions. The Greens/EFA Group successfully campaigned to achieve a partial ban on surveillance-based advertising.

Alexandra Geese MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur in the Committee on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection, comments:

"The ban on surveillance advertising based on sensitive data such as a user's origin, political opinion or sexual orientation as well as the total ban on surveillance advertising to children and minors is a groundbreaking success.

"The Greens/EFA have successfully pushed for consistent prosecution of illegal content, protection against manipulation, new standards in the protection of minors and for independent audits. Particularly groundbreaking is the new right for NGOs and academic researchers to access data collected by major platforms. Recommendation systems currently promote extremist content and disinformation which endangers our democracy. In the future we will be able to study them and pass evidence-based rules that will make the internet a better place."

- Plenary Speech Patrik Breyer

- Plenary Speech Alexandra Geese
- Plenary Speech Kim Van Sparrentak
- Plenary Speech Anna Cavazzini
- Plenary Speech Rasmus Andresen

ANIMAL TRANSPORT: FINAL VOTE ON SPECIAL INQUIRY COMMITTEE INTO ANIMAL TRANSPORT (ANIT) RECOMMENDATIONS

On Thursday, MEPs voted on the recommendations of the Special Inquiry Committee on the Protection of Animals during Transport (ANIT), launched to investigate failures in implementing EU law on animal transport throughout Europe. The recommendations will form the basis for the Commission's new legislation on transporting animals in the EU. These proposals are expected by 2023. The Greens/EFA Group have pushed for high standards, including a maximum journey time of 8 hours and a ban on transport into third countries that do not comply with EU animal welfare standards.

The recommendations insist on the need to limit transport as much as possible, and to shift from the transport of live animals to the transport of meat and genetic material instead. We insisted on the need to develop species-specific provisions, particularly with a 4-hour limit for transport of fragile animals such as rabbits and poultry. We also called for the inclusion of welfare provisions for further species, like fish, and commercially transported pets. The recommendations demand an EU-wide harmonised system of sanctions against those who break the law. They support better cooperation between Member States, and ask the Commission to start infringement proceedings against Member States with widespread breaches. Not least, we called for stronger oversight on sea transport, which today is poorly covered by legislation.

Tilly Metz, Greens/EFA MEP and Chair of the Animal Transport Committee, comments:

"Over its year and a half of operations, the ANIT committee has found that current legislation is not being properly implemented. The regulation on animal transport is inadequate, inaccurate and outdated. Systemic deficiencies cause unbearable suffering for animals, which we can end with clearer and more protective legislation, better enforcement and real political will.

We managed to call for significant improvements in the report and recommendations of the ANIT committee. But we now expect the Commission to follow the Parliament recommendations and go further. The 2023 revision must be even more ambitious, and include a stricter ban on the transport of unweaned animals as well as pregnant ones, and to fix a strict 8 hours limit for all type of road transports, as well as a strict limit to sea transport. These reports and recommendations must be the first step toward this direction."

- Plenary Speech Thomas Waitz
- Plenary Speech Tilly Metz
- Plenary Speech Caroline Roose
- Plenary Speech Eleonora Evi
- Plenary Speech Pär Holmgren
- Plenary Speech Manuela Ripa
- Plenary Speech Anna Deparney-Grunenberg

THE SITUATION IN KAZAKHSTAN

On Wednesday, the Parliament debated the issue of the alarming crackdown against protests in Kazakhstan. Greens/EFA MEPs, along with MEPs from other political groups, called for an end to the violence. The government must release all those detained solely for exercising their rights to peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. More international scrutiny is needed, as well as immediate reforms to improve the situation of people in Kazakhstan.

On Thursday, the Parliament voted in favour of a resolution with an overwhelming majority, affirming the need for an independent and transparent investigation into all cases of the use of force by the security forces.

Viola von Cramon MEP, Greens/EFA member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, comments on the situation in Kazakhstan:

“We demand an end to violence against protesters and arbitrary arrests. The Kazakh president should withdraw the shoot-to-kill order, stop escalation, and ensure the implementation of urgently needed reforms, in particular regarding the rule of law. We call for a diplomatic initiative, such as an EU task force, to bring the parties involved to the table."

- Plenary Speech Viola von Cramon
- Plenary Speech Markéta Gregorova
- Plenary Speech Sergey Lagodinsky
- Plenary Speech Tatjana Zdanoka
- Text adopted
- Press Release

PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENCY – COUNCIL AND COMMISSION STATEMENTS

France took over the EU Council Presidency from Slovenia on 1st January. During this week's plenary, President Macron took the floor to illustrate the priorities of the Presidency and to discuss his plans and ambitions for the French presidency of the Council of the European Union. The French Presidency must put the European Union back on track with regard to the rule of law. In view of the ecological and social crises, the French Presidency must match words with actions and ensure that the European Union enters a new political era with the Green Deal.

The Greens/EFA Group will scrutinise the work of the Presidency to ensure that the climate, the environment and fundamental rights are strengthened in the next six months. We asked President Macron to honour diversity, especially linguistic diversity, in the European Union, and called on him to respect people's democratic right to decide their own future.

- Plenary Speech Yannick Jadot

MORE

Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- Joint motion for a resolution on the situation in Kazakhstan
- Protection of animals during transport within and outside the Union
- Violations of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong
- Situation in Kazakhstan
- Political crisis in Sudan

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: 18 February 2022

Recommended

Press release

©jonathan-marchal



[Tilly METZ elected European Parliament Vice-President]

12.11.2026

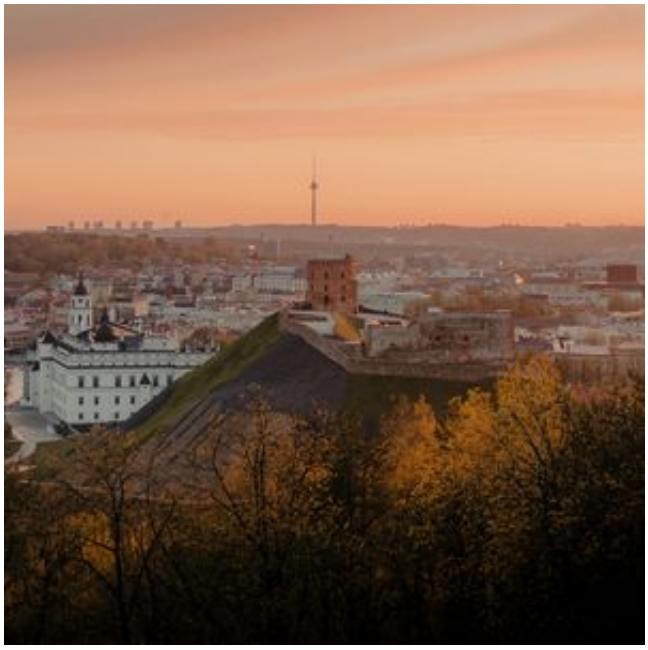
Press release



[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

Press release

Tim Hurst (CC BY-SA 2.0)



[Methane Regulation: European Parliament capitulates to…]

22.10.2026

Contact person



Katy Cadwallader

Human Resources Officer



Jeroen Steeman

Community manager

Please share

- E-Mail