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Debriefing of the May Plenary Session

8-11 May 2023

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Methane regulation

The Methane Regulation is an essential part of the Green Deal and Fit for 55 package. On Tuesday, a broad majority of MEPs approved a strong negotiating mandate for the proposal to reduce methane emissions in the energy sector.

The proposal includes a ban on the routine flaring and venting of methane and obligations to detect and quickly repair leaks from pipelines and valves. It also requires the Commission to set a binding target for reducing methane emissions until 2030. The new law must also apply to imports of gas, oil and coal from 2026 onwards.

Jutta Paulus MEP, European Parliament rapporteur for the Industry, Research and Energy Committee, welcomes the strong negotiating position:

"The European Parliament is determined to reduce methane emissions which are an important contributor to climate change. Routine venting and flaring of methane is irresponsible and fuels the global climate crisis. Capturing and using useless leaking gas also helps alleviate the energy crisis. Most methane emissions occur outside the EU, so it is only logical that strict rules must also apply to imports of gas, coal and oil. Reducing methane emissions means more protection for the climate and more energy sovereignty."

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Press Release

- Blogpost on FitFor55 Package
- Social Media – Twitter: Greens/EFA

EU accession to the Istanbul Convention

On Wednesday, the European Parliament gave consent for EU accession to the Istanbul Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (IC). All EU Member States have previously signed up to the convention but six countries have yet to ratify the accord. Following Wednesday's vote, the Council is expected to ratify the convention on behalf of the EU as a whole in June.

Dr. Sylwia Spurek MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the Istanbul Convention in the Women's Rights and Gender Equality and the Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs committees, comments:

"With the European Parliament's vote, we are sending a strong signal to all of EUs Member States that women's rights are human rights, and that all women and girls across Europe have the right to live free from gender based violence. It is crucial that we protect and strengthen the rights of survivors of gender based violence. It is time for the Member States to step up to the plate and commit to protect more women from becoming victims."

"The fight for women's rights is neverending, but today we have shown that tenacity pays off. Since 2017, the European Parliament has repeatedly asked the Council to move forward with the accession process. The Istanbul Convention is about saving lives, not about ideology. Either you are on the side of women or you are on the side of perpetrators of violence. With the Court of Justice of the European Union ruling backing our position, we finally managed to push the Council to agree to the accession of the Istanbul Convention."

- Text adopted - EU accession: institutions and public administration of the Union
- Text adopted - EU accession: judicial cooperation in criminal matters, asylum and non-refoulement
- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
- Social media - Instagram: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament

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Europe Day - Debate with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz

Tuesday, on Europe Day, MEPs debated with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, as part of the "This is Europe" round of debates with EU Member State leaders. **Terry Reintke MEP** and co-chair of the Greens/EFA Group, addressed him in those words:

"I want a Chancellor who has learned from his party's mistakes towards Russia and does not adopt the same tone towards China. I would like to see a Chancellor who knows that this continent can only be competitive if it sticks together and if it finally moves ahead with the green transformation. I would like to see a Chancellor who says, "I come from a city [Hamburg] *that has become rich and powerful, not because it has closed itself off, but because it has opened up to the world", and that is why I am clearly against an asylum policy that wants to build a Fortress Europe. That's the kind of Chancellor I want."*

To celebrate Europe Day, the Greens/EFA organised a photo opportunity with their MEPs in the Louise Weiss courtyard.

- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament
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Empowering Consumers in the Green Transition

The vast majority of MEPs in the lead committee on consumer protection (IMCO) have urged for greater protection for consumers against practices of premature obsolescence of products. They have also called for clear labelling of the repairability of products.

On Thursday, MEPs voted massively in favour of a mandatory repair score on products and for a ban on greenwashing, making life easier for consumers & products more sustainable. It is another strong call to stop premature obsolescence of products, to improve labelling and to fight greenwashing by banning misleading practices and a clear commitment to consumer rights. The directive is part of the legislative package "Empowering Consumers in the Green Transition", that aims to make it easier for consumers to compare the sustainability of the products they purchase.

David Cormand MEP addressed to the European Parliament:

"The European internal market will no longer be the same with the ecological constraints that we are facing. We must be the first economic entity to understand the decisive shift that we have to make."

- Text adopted
- Social media - Twitter: Greens/ EFA in the European Parliament

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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- Media freedom and freedom of expression in Algeria, the case of journalist Ihsane El-Kadi
- Belarus: the inhumane treatment and hospitalisation of prominent opposition leader Viktar Babaryka
- Myanmar, notably the dissolution of democratic political parties

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Contact person



Jeroen Steeman

Community manager

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