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Debriefing of the October II plenary session

17-20 October 2022

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EUCO

On Thursday and Friday, EU Heads of State met at the European Council Summit in Brussels. The Greens/EFA has called for a strong signal of unity and solidarity with Ukraine and for answers to skyrocketing energy prices. In addition, ahead of the UN Climate Conference in Sharm El Sheik later this year, the Council must decide on concrete binding measures to keep the climate promises made in Glasgow to limit global warming.

Terry Reintke, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments:

"The European Council must continue showing strong support and unity, both internally and externally, for Ukraine. We Greens/EFA strongly condemn the Russian missile attacks on Ukrainian civilians. The EU Member States must hit the Russian President where it hurts with further sanctions and, in European unity, supply Ukraine with the weapons it needs."

"The Russian president wants to use energy and disinformation as a weapon to divide our societies, spread fear and destabilize our democracy. The Greens/EFA call on all democrats to defend the stability and strength of European democracy. Cooperation with right-wing extremists must remain a taboo."

Phillippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments:

“The Greens/EFA call on the heads of state and government to respond to skyrocketing energy prices by introducing a massive investment programme. A dynamic gas price cap will not be enough to end social inequalities. Now is the time to terminate the toxic dependence on Russian oil and gas and focus on investments in renewables.”

“We call on the Council to agree on concrete binding measures to limit global warming ahead of the UN Climate Conference in Sharm El Sheik. States responsible for the climate crisis must keep the Glasgow climate promise and pay for the loss and damages people suffer from floods, heatwaves and droughts."

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media: Twitter - Greens/EFA
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Rule of law in Malta

Five years have passed since the tragic assassination of journalist, Daphne Caruana Galizia, in Malta. Despite several arrests in the case, the person or people behind the murder remain unconvicted. On Monday, the European Parliament will debate the state of the rule of law in Malta, in particular concerning media freedom and safety of journalists.

The European Parliament’s resolution paid tribute to Daphne and other journalists working to expose organized crime, tax fraud and money laundering, and stressed the importance of those involved in such illegal activities to be held to account. While a degree of progress has been made in Malta, not nearly enough is being done. There are still serious problems for media freedom, the safety of journalists and the rule of law in general. The European Parliament calls for the Maltese authorities to cooperate with European authorities and ensure that proposed reforms addressing these issues meet European and international standards.

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media: Twitter - Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield
- Social Media: Twitter - Greens/EFA
- Social Media: Instagram - Greens/EFA

Frontex discharge

Members of the European Parliament rejected the granting of the 2020 budget discharge to the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, Frontex. The rejection comes after countless reports from journalists, NGOs and the European Anti-Fraud Office (OLAF) regarding internal dysfunctions and allegations of cover ups of fundamental rights violations, including pushbacks. The Agency did not comply with recommendations made by the European Parliament to solve the various systemic problems. The Greens/EFA Group supported the rejection of the 2020 discharge to the agency.

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA MEP and member of the Committee of Budgetary Control, comments:

“To this date, Frontex has still not carried out the structural reforms called for by the European Parliament in our 2019 discharge report or remedied the human rights violations identified by OLAF. With a budget of 900 million euros in 2022, Frontex is the most well funded European agency. We can no longer tolerate public money being used to violate European legislation and international law.

“By not granting discharge to the Frontex agency, the European Parliament refuses to endorse its illegal activities that deny refugees their right to asylum and put lives in danger."

Saskia Bricmont, Greens/EFA MEP and member of the Committee of Civil Liberties, comments:

“The Greens/EFA group has long been calling for greater accountability and transparency of Frontex. However, as recent press reports confirmed by OLAF highlight, serious questions around human rights abuses, mismanagement and lobbying continue to hang over the agency.

“Frontex and its former management benefited from complacency and a laissez-faire attitude on the part of the Member States. In addition to its numerous internal dysfunctions, Frontex knowingly ignored violations of fundamental human rights and is guilty of indulging national authorities who actively engage in illegal deportation in total contradiction with international and European law.”

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media: Twitter - Tineke Strik
- Social Media: Twitter - Saskia Bricmont
- Social Media: Twitter - Damien Carême
- Social Media: Twitter - Erik Marquardt
- Social Media: Twitter - Greens/EFA
- Social Media: Twitter - Greens/EFA

Energy crisis package

On Tuesday, the European Commission presented a new emergency package aimed at combating the sharp increase in gas prices. The package was published ahead of the energy summit on Thursday and Friday this week. The Greens/EFA Group welcomes the Commission’s proposal for a joint gas purchase tool, but it’s uncertain if this will be enough to reduce gas import prices. Through the main European gas exchange (TTF), the proposed temporary dynamic price cap on gas imports can function to limit very high prices.

However, these measures should not lead to an overall increase in the consumption of gas, limit further expansion of renewables or undermine the security of supply. The Greens/EFA Group also calls for an EU solidarity fund, the expansion of the windfall tax to all sectors profiting from the war in Ukraine and the energy crisis, massive investments in renewable energies, an immediate embargo on imports of fossil fuels and uranium from Russia and further measures to save energy and improve energy efficiency in order to mitigate the rising energy costs.

Ville Niinistö MEP, Greens/EFA coordinator of the Industry, Research and Energy Committee and member of the Environment Committee, comments:

"The Greens/EFA Group welcomes the possibilities for joint gas purchases proposed by the Commission, but this is only a first necessary step needed to bring the energy prices down. Now it is up to the EU Member States to unite Europe and jointly work on hastening the exit from dependency on imported fossil fuels and especially gas. We can still do more to reduce gas demand and increase energy savings this winter. We need

to invest massively in renewables and energy efficiency. The Greens/EFA call for broad energy savings to help reduce gas demand and solidarity in the expansion of renewables and sustainable energy infrastructure."

Ernest Urtasun MEP, Greens/EFA coordinator of the Economic and Monetary Affairs committee, comments:

"It is deplorable that multinational companies have profited from the consequences of the war on Ukraine and market speculation, all while citizens suffer. A European windfall tax and the creation of a new European fund to support households and accelerate energy transition is crucial. It's time that the excess profits made by the biggest polluters and the richest go towards building a more just society and greener economy instead of their already stuffed pockets."

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Greens/EFA study on 100 percent renewables by 2040
- Greens/EFA policy paper on the windfall tax
- Social Media: Twitter - Greens/EFA

COP27

On Thursday, a cross-party majority of Members of the European Parliament adopted a resolution ahead of the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP27, in Sharm El Sheik. The resolution calls for world leaders to increase their climate pledges, for a loss and damage facility, and for $100 billion in climate finance to be paid by the end of this year to countries and regions most affected by climate change.

MEPs also called on the EU to increase its climate targets with concrete binding measures to limit global warming to a maximum of 1.5 degrees, and for a treaty on the non-proliferation of fossil fuels. The Greens/EFA successfully negotiated for the resolution to include demands for the release of political prisoners in Egypt , freedom for civil society and special attention to the gender impact of climate change.

Pär Holmgren MEP, Greens/EFA rapporteur on the resolution for the UN Climate Change Conference 2022 in Sharm-el-Sheikh, Egypt (COP27), comments:

"We are already facing irreversible consequences from climate change, and the most vulnerable populations in the world are paying the price. For decades now, small island nations and countries worst affected have been forced to fight for a just transition and fair compensation for the enormous loss and damages that we, the developed countries, have caused their societies. We need climate justice now."

Bas Eickhout MEP, Greens/EFA coordinator of the Environment committee and Head of the European Parliaments COP27-delegation, comments:

"At COP27 we urgently need to make progress on the subject of loss and damage: therefore we call for additional sources of financing to address the adverse effects of climate change. Such a mechanism would ensure that the costs of climate change are distributed more fairly, that developing countries have access to resources to tackle climate change, and that richer countries pay for the climate damage they're causing elsewhere. The current floods in Pakistan make the need for such a mechanism painfully clear. The country has barely contributed to climate pollution, but it is paying the price for the damage caused by others."

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media: Twitter – Greens/EFA

Budget 2023

On Wednesday, Members of the European Parliament adopted a position on the General Budget of the European Union for the financial year of 2023. The Greens/EFA Group supports the Parliament's reading of the budget.

Francisco Guerreiro MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the General Budget of the European Union for the financial year of 2023 and member of the Budget committee, comments:

“The Greens/EFA successfully advocated for more ambition towards tackling climate change and biodiversity crisis, which is becoming increasingly urgent. During the budget negotiations, the Parliament’s groups have found a good compromise that addresses the crises and challenges currently faced by the European Union as a consequence of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. We also managed to negotiate large increases for humanitarian aid and support to the EU's Eastern and Southern neighborhoods and reinforcements for programmes that will further accelerate the energy transition for all and tackle the climate and biodiversity crisis both in the EU and globally.”

- Text adopted

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- http://www.facebook.com/greensefa

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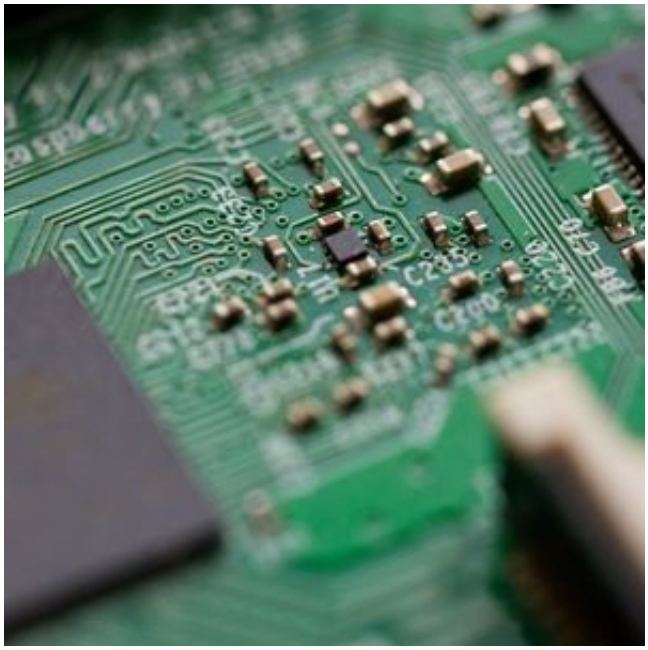


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Contact person



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Human Resources Officer

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