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## Greens/EFA Round-up

## Debriefing of the plenary week Strasbourg 24-27 February 2014



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## Economic crisis response of the Troika

#### *Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs*

*Committee Vote - Monday 24 February 2014* The final report of the European Parliament's inquiry into the role of the EU-ECB-IMF troika was voted by the Economic and Monetary Affairs committee Monday. With very serious allegations of maladministration and contraventions of EU and international law levied against the EU-ECB-IMF Troika, the Greens were to the fore in pushing for this inquiry. The report delivers a clear and detailed rebuke to the EU-ECB-IMF Troika and highlights major flaws in its handling of the economic crisis in EU member states. Importantly, the report outlines several potential conflicts of interest inherent to the involvement of EU institutions in the Troika and the European Stability Mechanism. The report calls on the EU Commission to provide a comprehensive ex-post assessment of its involvement in the Troika programmes, including as regards fundamental rights. We hope a large majority of MEPs support the report when it is voted on by the Parliament as a whole.

- [Press release \(EN/DE\)](#)

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### **Testimony from Edward Snowden**

#### *Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs*

*Committee Vote - Monday 24 February 2014* Civil Liberties committee MEPs voted to give a platform for testimony from Edward Snowden in the context of its inquiry into the revelations of mass surveillance by secret services. The Greens pushed for protection for Snowden, to allow him to testify directly or by live video link, but, regrettably, a majority of MEPs failed to support this. We welcomed confirmation of the testimony, which will be in the form of a written response to MEPs' questions, and will continue to call on EU member states to grant protection to Edward Snowden. The inquiry would be incomplete without any form of testimony from its main witness and we are pushing for this testimony to be heard before a final Parliament vote.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)

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### **CO2 emissions from cars**

#### *Legislative report (Ulmer report)*

#### *Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety*

*Plenary debate Monday 24 February 2014 – Vote Tuesday 25 February 2014* MEPs confirmed Tuesday a backroom deal which will weaken the agreed rules on car CO2 emissions limits for 2020. The deal, which was forced through on the insistence of the German government, overturned an earlier agreement, which had been reached to implement a fleet average for car CO2 emissions of 95g of CO2 per km by 2020. Car manufacturers have been given more time to reach the limits and loopholes will remain. The Greens believed an original agreement reached between the EP and Council was already low on ambition. This further dilution will slow down innovation towards less polluting and more efficient cars.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)

- [Plenary speech – Carl Schlyter \(SV/EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Aid for the most deprived**

*Legislative report (Costello report)*

*Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*

*Vote – Tuesday 25 February 2014* A new EU funding scheme for the most deprived people was confirmed in a vote by MEPs Tuesday. After controversial moves to abolish an existing scheme under the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, which provided food aid to the most vulnerable people, the Greens were to the fore in pushing for the scheme to instead be updated and made part of EU social funds. The Greens support the new scheme, which will make the best use of the available resources and strikes the right balance for addressing the needs of the most deprived, with food aid and social inclusion measures.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Railway safety and EU rules**

*Legislative report (Green MEP Michael Cramer)*

*Committee on Transport and Tourism*

*Plenary debate Tuesday 25 February 2014 – vote Wednesday 26 February 2014* MEPs voted Tuesday on a series of legislative proposals on the European rail sector: the 4th railway package. Green draftsman on the rail safety legislation Michael Cramer has ensured the European Railway Agency will be made a one-stop shop for railway safety certificates, in future avoiding cumbersome individual applications in each member state. This will reduce costs while ensuring a higher harmonised railway safety level across Europe. The package also proposes changes to the current regulation on public services by rail and governance of railway companies. Many more discussions and changes are expected during the upcoming negotiations with the member states before the final text will be adopted.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Karim Zéribi \(FR\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **eCall vehicle tracking and privacy concerns**

*Legislative report (Sehnalova/De Backer reports)*

Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Plenary debate Tuesday 25 February 2014 – vote Wednesday 26 February 2014 MEPs voted Wednesday on new rules that would make the eCall system, which aims to send an automatic emergency service call in the event of accident, mandatory for all new cars. The Greens have concerns about the privacy implications of such a mandatory device which constantly records geolocation, even if the location is only sent when the system is activated by an accident. Subsequently, the Greens voted against. There are major doubts about the effectiveness of eCall, with the infrastructure not complete and high potential for false-alarm calls. There are also far more effective steps that could be taken to improve road safety, such as a small reduction in speed limits.

- [Press release \(DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Judith Sargentini \(NL/EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **EU-Switzerland relations**

*Plenary debate*

*Wednesday 26 February 2014* The EU's relationship with Switzerland has hit a bump after the referendum in which a majority voted in favour of restrictions on the free movement of EU citizens to Switzerland. While the outcome has to be respected, it is also clear that there can be no quotas on the application of EU law and fundamental EU principles. The European Commission is right to defend this and the Swiss government will now have to work to find a viable solution, which respects this and guarantees the inviolable right to free movement as a core component of the single market. The ball is firmly in the Swiss government's court.

- [Plenary speech – Dany Cohn-Bendit \(FR/EN/DE\)](#)

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## **Youth unemployment and Europe's guarantee**

*Plenary debate*

*Committee on Employment and Social Affairs*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 26 February 2014* MEPs debated Wednesday the implementation of the Youth Guarantee in their countries. Youth unemployment remains a major crisis for Europe, young people under 25 are more than twice as likely to be unemployed as the rest of the working age population. The Greens have been at the forefront in pushing for the creation of the European Youth Guarantee Scheme which ensures that all young people under the age of 25 in Europe are entitled to receive a good-quality offer of employment, education, apprenticeship or traineeship within a period of four months after becoming unemployed or leaving formal education. However, implementation needs to be sped up.

- [Press release \(FR/ES/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Karima Delli \(FR\)](#)

- [Plenary speech – Elisabeth Schroedter \(DE\)](#)
- [Reclaim Your Future! – Youth campaign website](#)

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## **Tobacco and public health**

*Legislative report (McAvan report)*

*Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety*

*Vote Wednesday 26 February* After a controversial legislative process, an agreement on revised EU tobacco rules, which was reached before Christmas, was confirmed by MEPs Wednesday. For the Greens, the agreement is a bitter-sweet end to the legislative review. While it is a step forward for EU efforts to tackle the enormous social and health problems of tobacco products, it falls short of what was originally proposed and international best practice. It is very regrettable that the lobbying of the tobacco industry was successful in reducing the original ambition. More prominent warnings on packages and banning flavoured cigarettes are improvements but more could and should have been delivered.

- [Press release \(EN/FR/DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Use of armed Drones**

*Motion for resolution*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 26 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 27 February 2014* The European Parliament adopted Thursday a resolution, initiated by Green MEPs, condemning the illegal use of armed drones and raising concerns with EU research spending on this technology. The resolution calls for a strict ban of extrajudicial and extraterritorial killings by armed drones. The text adopted also stresses the need to urgently regulate the use of drones by developing an EU legal framework. MEPs called on EU member states to strictly refrain from participating in or facilitating extrajudicial targeted killings, for instance by sharing relevant information with countries such as the US.

- [Press Release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Barbara Lochbihler \(DE/EN\)](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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## **EU judicial cooperation and basic rights**

*Legislative report (Melo, Ludford reports)*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 26 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 27 February 2014* MEPs voted on two separate reports on EU judicial cooperation Thursday. The Greens support moves towards stronger judicial cooperation but this must go hand-in-hand with guarantees on basic rights. To this end, the group shares concerns expressed in the report on the European arrest warrant, which has led to a high volume of requests from some member states for often frivolous offences, with basic rights not guaranteed. The group supported the final legislation on the European investigation order however, as here we managed to correct the mistakes made in the European Arrest Warrant by ensuring greater proportionality and respect for fundamental rights.

- [Press release \(EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted \(Melo report\)](#)
- [Text adopted \(Ludford report\)](#)

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## **Ukrainian crisis and Europe's role**

*Motion for resolution*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 26 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 27 February 2014* MEPs debated the situation in Ukraine, and adopted a resolution Thursday. The recent brutal crackdown by the Ukrainian authorities, which resulted in the tragic loss of life, needs to be clearly condemned by the EU. The emerging agreement gives cause for optimism but the EU must do all within its power to ensure a peaceful and democratic solution to the situation, which responds to the legitimate demands and aspirations of those in Maidan Square. This also implies a change of tack in its relations with Russia. The EU must step up financial and economic assistance to Ukraine and find ways to counterbalance eventual retaliatory measures by Russia. The EU, Russia and Ukraine must immediately come together to work towards a de-escalation of the situation. The offer of an Association Agreement with the EU is still valid once Ukraine is ready to sign it. This is the first step of a European perspective for the country in line with art.49 of the Treaty of Lisbon that states that any European country can apply for EU membership provided that it fully respects EU founding values.

- [Press Release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Rebecca Harms \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution](#)
- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release \(EN/DE\) – 6 February 2014](#)
- [Plenary speech – Rebecca Harms \(DE/EN/FR\) 5 February 2014](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for a resolution – 4 February 2014](#)
- [Call for support for Ukraine \(EN/DE\) – 31 January 2014](#)
- [Greens/EFA event From Maidan Square to the European Parliament – 11 December 2014](#)
- [Resolution – Situation in Ukraine - text adopted on 6 February 2014](#)

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## **Indonesian rainforests and climate change**

*Legislative report and resolution (Green MEP Yannick Jadot)*

*Committee on International Trade*

*Plenary debate Wednesday 26 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 27 February 2014* An agreement between the EU and Indonesia on forest law enforcement was voted on by MEPs Thursday. With Indonesia, the third-largest location of rainforests in the world, having major problems with illegal deforestation and destroying forests for palm oil and paper production, Green draftsman Yannick Jadot successfully sought to ensure the agreement prioritises tackling this problem. While the Indonesian timber licencing scheme has seen some improvements, it has major loopholes, which are compounded by corruption. The report highlights these points.

- [Text adopted](#)

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## **Extreme weather and climate change**

*Plenary debate*

*Thursday 27 February 2014* The devastation caused by the extraordinary number of extreme weather events across Europe over the past two months was discussed by MEPs Thursday morning. With models showing climate change will lead to an ever-increasing amount of extreme weather events, the Greens believe Europe's politicians need to take note and draw the right consequences ahead of a decision to set out the EU's climate and energy policy to 2030. To this end, Green MEPs bore rainbow Climate flags with them during the debate. The situation has also served to underline the flaws of cutting the EU budget and, notably, emergency funds for member states.

- [Stop Climate Change campaign site](#)
- [Stop Climate Change - Facebook](#)

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## **End FGM**

*Campaign* Green MEPs have signed a pledge to act to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Green MEPs will continue combat violence against women and children, including the elimination of Female Genital Mutilation. We've signed the pledge and are encouraging all other MEPs and candidates to do so.

- [Photo – Facebook](#)
- [Photo – Flickr](#)
- [End FGM Campaign website](#)

More information

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**ALSO**



- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on Iraq](#)

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*Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up: 14 March 2014*

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