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Greens/EFA Debriefing

Plenary week, 12-15 November 2018

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Clean Energy Package

Monday 12

The European Parliament adopted Tuesday the final Energy Package for more renewable energy, greater energy efficiency and a legally binding roadmap to fulfil the five dimension of the Energy Union. The package includes the Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Directives as well as the Governance Regulation on Energy and Climate.

The Energy Efficiency Directive and its 32,5% efficiency target by 2030 is a step in the right direction. **Benedek Jávor**, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur, commented: “Energy efficiency means greater climate protection, better home insulation and energy-saving appliances, which at the end of the day means more money in peoples' pockets and helps to lift millions and millions of EU citizens lifted from energy poverty.”

The Renewable Energy Directive stipulates that renewable energies will account for 32% of the European Union's energy budget from 2030. For the first time, the EU has taken a step in the direction of phasing out specific bio-fuels which contribute to deforestation through EU legislation.

Bas Eickhout, Green/EFA rapporteur the bio-energy part of the Renewable Energy Directive, commented:

"We need urgent action to halt the deforestation and habitat destruction linked with the production of food-based biofuels. We succeeded in ensuring that there is no longer a direct European stimulus driving the use of these types of fuels. This legislation also makes sure that the use of palm oil has to be phased out. It is very important that the European Commission now puts the legislative text into action."

Jakop Dalunde, Greens/EFA rapporteur on the Energy Governance Regulation, commented: "*We cannot avoid catastrophic climate change if we rely on warm words alone. We must start thinking of our emissions as a 'carbon budget' of which we only have a little left if we are to avoid disaster. The Energy Governance regulation enshrines the principle of long-term strategy towards an indispensable goal of reaching a net zero-emission economy 'as early as possible'. No doubt that limiting the global emissions to 1.5°C means for the Union to become net-zero by 2040. This Regulation will serve as the basis for a European Climate Law which should enable all European countries to work towards a cleaner, greener future."*

Greens/EFA Climate spokesperson, **Yannick Jadot**, commented: *"Today, the European Parliament adopted an objective of at least 32% of renewable energy sources by 2030 for the EU. This is not enough with regards to the Paris Climate deal. However, thanks to the Parliament, we have at least done much better than the Commission and Counsel's weak initial proposals of 27%."*

Greens/EFA Rapporteur on Energy Governance Regulation, **Michèle Rivasi**, said: *"At last, we have a roadmap allowing to stay the course of the Paris Deal. All EU countries will now have to establish action plans to keep global warming under 2°, with the ambition to stay below 1.5°.*

Texts adopted

- Energy efficiency
- Governance of the Energy Union
- Promotion of the use of energy from renewable sources
- Press release
- Plenary video – Michèle Rivasi
- Plenary video – Jakop Dalunde
- Plenary video – Bas Eickhout
- Plenary video – Benedek Jávor
- Plenary video – Yannick Jadot
- Social media

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Emissions from Trucks and other heavy duty vehicles

Debate and vote Wednesday 14

The European Parliament voted in favour of Greens/EFA rapporteur Bas Eickhout's proposed changes to the European Commission's regulation on "CO2 emission standards for new heavy-duty vehicles", which would set for the first time CO2 emissions reduction targets for trucks and heavy goods vehicles in the EU.

Despite intense lobbying from the industry, MEPs endorsed the Environment Committee's position calling for higher ambition than the initial Commission's proposal.

Trucks and heavy goods vehicles will have to reduce their CO2 emissions, by 20% by 2025, and by 35% by 2030, compared with 2019 levels. The proposal also puts in place a benchmark for zero- and low-emission vehicles of 5% in 2025 and 20% in 2030, to incentive manufacturers to make the shift to new technologies. The text has a strong basis for negotiations with the Council and the European Commission.

Bas Eickhout, Greens/EFA rapporteur on the proposals, commented:

"With this vote the European Parliament is sending a strong signal that manufacturers have a duty to drive down emissions from their vehicles and join the race for a cleaner future. After the IPCC report, it's clear that policy-makers cannot remain asleep at the wheel when it comes to climate action".

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Plenary video – Bas Eickhout
- Social media

Further information
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Future of Europe debate with Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany

Tuesday 13

Continuing the European Parliament's Future of Europe series, Chancellor Angela Merkel gave a speech to the plenary on Tuesday. Greens/EFA Co-Presidents **Ska Keller** and **Philippe Lamberts** call on the German Chancellor to revive the European engagement of the German government and to unblock important files in the European Council.

"A lot of good law initiatives are right now blocked in the Council and the German government is one of the biggest problems there; be it the fight against climate change, for tax justice or the reform of the Eurozone. The worst example is climate policy where Berlin still seems to be the lobby of the car and coal industry. We need an ambitious European offer for the UN Climate Conference in Katowice and the German government has to push for more ambition instead of bringing it down." said Greens/EFA Co-President **Ska Keller** during her plenary speech.

- Video – Ska Keller
- More on Future of Europe debates

Romania rule of law resolution

Vote Tuesday 13

Following on from mass protests against rampant corruption in Romania, the European Parliament adopted Tuesday a resolution, based on an initiative of the Greens/EFA group. The text calls on Romanian authorities to counter any measures which would decriminalise corruption in office, apply the national anti-corruption strategy, as well as improve the situation for media freedom and strengthen the rule of law in the country.

A Greens/EFA amendment on the investigation of riot police action was adopted.

- Text adopted
- Social media

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Multiannual Financial Framework

Debate Tuesday 13, vote Wednesday 14

MEPs approved Wednesday new EU budget from 2021, which is better suited to tackling the climate change with taxes on plastics, emissions trading and tech companies. Following Green demands, the European Parliament pushed to increase the EU bugdet to commit to 30% climate-related spending by 2027 and to make the EU less dependent on the payment behaviour of EU governments.

For **Jordi Solé**, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF): “The Parliament is sending a strong signal that we need a budget that can better stand-up to the challenges that the EU faces for the coming years.”

Helga Trüpel, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the reform of the EU's own resources, commented:

“The European Parliament is ready for negotiations on a future budget, but now EU governments should agree on their common position"

The report, which content-wise reflects the Parliament's reports agreed upon in March, would see big gains for the Greens/EFA group on climate related spending, which will be 30% of the EU's budget, a tripling of the rights and values programme, and more money for nuclear decommissioning in Lithuania.

With the Parliament and Commission proposals now on the table, it is up to EU governments to agree their position. However, if the final outcome of the negotiation is not up to the challenges of the EU and does not provide instruments for a more social and sustainable Europe, the Greens/EFA group will withdraw support for the MFF.

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Plenary video – Jordi Solé
- Plenary video – Helga Trüpel
- Plenary video – Indrek Tarand

Further information
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Brexit

Wednesday 15

The UK Cabinet agreed Wednesday on the basis of the draft withdraw agreement of the UK from the EU. For the Greens/EFA Group, this deal will put the UK in a weaker position than as EU member.

The deal will now need to be ratified by the UK parliament, the European Parliament and agreed on by the governments of the EU-27.

Philippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament commented:

"Brexit has always been a lose-lose game for both the UK and the EU. Given the constraints of self-imposed Tory 'red lines' and the Good Friday Agreement, this text is the best the EU could offer without undermining its foundations.

"Now that we have the deal on the table, British citizens know what Brexit will really mean for them. That's why it would be fair to ask them whether Brexit is the future they want. If not, we would warmly welcome their continued EU membership."

- Press release
- Social media

Humanitarian visas

Debate Wednesday 14

A majority of MEPs voted in favour Wednesday of Humanitarian Visas. The Greens/EFA have consistently been calling for the establishment of safe and legal pathways for migration, on the one hand for those seeking international or humanitarian protection and, on the other hand for migration, including work and family reunification.

Unfortunately, following a technical problem during the vote, the text was not adopted at this time. A new report will be initiated at committee level and voted upon in the future.

Such a report with recommendations to the Commission on Humanitarian Visas, if adopted, would oblige the European Commission to act and propose concrete legislation establishing a European Humanitarian Visa, which would allow persons seeking international protection to travel to the European Union safely in order to do so.

- Plenary video – Bodil Valero

Further information
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Rail passengers' rights and obligations

Debate Wednesday 14, vote Thursday 15

MEPs voted for rail passengers throughout the EU to have a greater entitlement to compensation without the loophole of force majeure, for full rights even when travelling with several railway providers, and to be able to take bicycles on the train. The revised Passenger Rights Regulation will now go to "trilogue" negotiations with the Council and the European Commission.

For delays of between one and one and a half hours passengers will be entitled a refund of 50% of the ticket price. For delays of one and a half to two hours this will rise to 75% percent of the ticket price, and the full ticket price will be refunded for delays of more than two hours.

The effect of this proposal is that it is likely to become just as easy to book trains as booking flight tickets. This will enable smart entrepreneur to come up with the equivalent of Skyscanner – but for trains. Also welcomed the fact that the European railway companies will have to create more spaces for bicycles in train carriages, which will encourage greener and healthier commuting.

- Text adopted
- Press release
- Plenary speech – Michael Cramer

Further information
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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- Human rights situation in Bangladesh
- Human rights situation in Cuba
- Vietnam, notably the situation of political prisoners

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