European Parliament Building Strasbourg © European Union 2017 - Source : EP

en

News | 12.02.2021

Greens/EFA debriefing of the plenary session

8 - 11 February

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- EU Vaccination Strategy
- Recovery and Resilience Facility
- Abortion ban in Poland
- New Circular Economy Action Plan
- Implementation report on Border Procedures
- Situation in Yemen
- Ostrovets nuclear power plant

_____

EU Vaccination Strategy

On Wednesday morning, the Members of the European Parliament debated in presence of the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, the EU's Vaccination Strategy. The Greens/EFA group are calling for global and equitable access to vaccines, a massive increase and government support for vaccine production, the temporary lifting of patent rights, disclosure of contracts with manufacturers and systematic EU-wide procedures for testing for mutations of the virus.

Ska Keller MEP, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, commented:

"The Greens/EFA group stand behind a common European approach to vaccine procurement. The investment in vaccine production must now be ramped up by a lot to save lives and avoid the tremendous costs of lockdowns. Intellectual property should not stand in the way of ensuring a quick and equal global distribution. The European Commission should work towards a temporary lifting of patent rights to allow more manufacturers to produce vaccines.

"No one is protected from the coronavirus until everyone is protected. We cannot let this virus deepen

global injustices and we must take responsibility and show solidarity. We need globally equitable access to vaccines because no region of the world should be left behind while rich countries are buying up vaccine doses. The faster vaccination moves forward globally, the faster we will reduce global death rates and get the pandemic under control.”

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

"Citizens have a right to know what the terms of vaccine contracts are. We call on Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to fully disclose the contracts with manufacturers. MEPs' access to redacted contracts is no substitute for proper in depth democratic oversight. We need a comprehensive European containment strategy. The guiding principles to get us to low case numbers must be testing, tracing and isolating. We should work to prevent further border closures between EU countries. Common cross-border uniform measures can prevent an intra-EU race of relaxations and lockdowns.

"We need more public investment in the expansion of vaccine production capacities. More information on the distribution and characteristics of mutations can limit the rapid spread of new virus variants. We call for systematic, Europe-wide screening procedures for the detection and examination of mutants as well as a seamless exchange of data. Together we will succeed in stopping the pandemic."

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media - Facebook: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Instagram: Greens/EFA
- Video - Ska Keller
- Video - Diana Riba i Giner
- Video - Tilly Metz
- Video - Jutta Paulus
- Video - Kim van Sparrentak
- Video - Margrete Auken
- Video - Rasmus Andresen
- Video - Anna Cavazzini
- Video - Katrin Langensiepen
- Video - Ville Niinistö
- Video - Sara Matthieu
- Video - Grace O’Sullivan
- Video - Manuela Ripa
- Video - Daniel Freund

Recovery and Resilience Facility

On Tuesday, Members of the European Parliament adopted the outcome of the negotiations into the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF). The RRF amounts to €672.5 billion (€312.5 billion in grants and €360 billion in loans) available to Member States to support investments and reforms, in favour of the ecological and digital transition and consistent with the “do no significant harm” principle. The Greens/EFA group welcome the allocation of at least 37% of the total national envelopes to biodiversity and climate, as well as at least 20% on digital spending.

Ernest Urtasun MEP, Greens/EFA negotiator on the RRF for the ECON Committee, comments:

"This agreement marks an historic step for Europe, we have shown that we can build this route to recovery together and support Member States worst hit by this crisis. The Recovery and Resilience Facility will have long lasting effects, which is why it's vital that these funds lay foundations fit for the future.

The RRF is ambitious in requiring climate investment targets of 37% for each country and builds on EU Taxonomy rules for sustainable finance. This passing of the RRF shows a united and sustained solution to the fallout from the Covid-19 pandemic and will the EU's resilience. In this sense, we will make full use of the powers granted to the Parliament in this regulation to monitor and scrutinize both the Member States' plans and the Commission's assessments, to ensure that climate, social and gender equality measures are at the core of the plans."

Damian Boeselager MEP, Greens/EFA negotiator on the RRF for the BUDG Committee, comments:

"The RRF is a game changer and an unprecedented sign of EU solidarity. For the first time ever, funds are raised collectively at the European level and directed to Member States based on the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis. This money will allow countries to respond to the fiscal pain caused by the pandemic, while maintaining or even increasing public investments in European priority areas, and channelling 250 billion Euro into the green transition, as well as 134 billion Euro in the digital transformation.

“For the RRF to be a major step forward for the economic architecture of the EU, we simply cannot afford to squander this historic opportunity. We need ambitious investments and reforms in all 27 EU states so that the programme contributes to a real modernisation of the EU. Only in this way can we also pave the way for a reform of fiscal policy coordination in Europe."

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Press release
- EFA Press release
- Social Media - Facebook: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Instagram: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Damian Boeselager
- Social Media - Twitter: Alexandra Geese
- Video - Damian Boeselager
- Video - Jordi Solé
- Video - Alexandra Geese
- Video - Bas Eickhout
- Video - Marie Toussaint
- Video - Sven Giegold
- Video - Ciarán Cuffe
- Video - Pär Holmgren
- Video - Henrike Hahn

De facto ban on abortion in Poland

Members of the European Parliament debated on the de facto ban on abortion in Poland. In October, the Polish "Constitutional Tribunal" ruled that abortions in the case of foetal abnormalities will be banned,

limiting the already incredibly restrictive abortion laws. The Greens/EFA group supports the Women's Strike protests and calls on the Commission and Council to act in defence of the rule of law in Poland.

Sylwia Spurek, Greens/EFA Vice Chair of Women's Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM) Committee, comments:

"Nobody has the right to judge women or blame or stigmatise their decisions. Yet, the Polish government is determined to attack women's rights. Through the government controlled 'Constitutional Tribunal', the ruling PiS party has decided to condemn women in Poland to cruelty and suffering. The situation today proves that Poland women cannot rely on the institutions responsible for the defence of the constitution and human rights to protect them.

The Polish government's abuse of the rule of law has real life consequences that will cause suffering for countless people. The EU must not continue to stand by and watch as the rights of European citizens are stripped away by a far-right government. The Council must take the Article 7 procedure against Poland seriously and act in defence of European values."

- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media - Instagram: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Terry Reintke
- Video - Sylwia Spurek
- Video - Terry Reintke

New Circular Economy Action Plan

MEPs, on Tuesday, adopted the Parliament's position on the New Circular Economy Action Plan. The Action Plan consists of 35 measures, including: Legislative proposals for a new sustainable product policy framework, sustainable production and better waste management of batteries, and a proposal for general waste reduction. The Greens/EFA group are calling for binding targets to reduce the use of resources, the right to repair, and a digital product passport that should inform consumers on the reparability, and legal measures to prevent premature obsolescence.

Anna Cavazzini, Greens/EFA and member of the Committee on on the Internal Market and Consumer Protection and rapporteur of the opinion, comments

"The EUs' Single Market is the lever for achieving the ecological transition of our economy, and the greenest economy is one in which waste and electronic waste are not even produced. The path towards a sustainable economy also leads through shop counters. Labelling of products with information on their lifespan, and reparability as well as the right to repair provide consumers more transparency and choices in their purchase decision. We call on the Commission to now quickly submit a legislative proposal on sustainable products including binding requirements on the total lifespan, the absence of hazardous substances and the reparability. Circular economy is good for the Climate, Resources and the consumers wallet."

Margrete Auken, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur for the report and member of the Committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Security, comments:

“We urgently need a real circular economy. Europe's over-consumption is rampant, we're using resources as if we had almost three planets. The Parliament is calling for binding EU targets to reduce our environmental footprint. To be sustainable, the circular economy must be free from toxic substances and work within planetary boundaries. Longer product life spans, the absence of hazardous substances and the re-usage of products must be the start of a transition from a 'throw-away society' towards better protection of the environment and the climate.

- Text adopted
- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media - Facebook: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Instagram: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Anna Cavazzini
- Social Media - Twitter: Margrete Auken
- Video - Anna Cavazzini
- Video - Ciaran Cuffe
- Video - Claude Gruffat
- Video - Margrete Auken
- Video - Ville Niinistö

Asylum Border Procedures

On Monday evening, Erik Marquardt presented the report on the implementation of border procedures that was approved by the Parliament on Tuesday. The report identifies severe legal concerns and calls for respect for human rights at EU’s external borders.

Erik Marquardt, Greens/EFA MEP and rapporteur, states:

“With this report, the European Parliament is taking a stance against restrictions on fundamental and human rights. MEPs are concerned about the increasing number of human rights violations at the EU's external borders which can often amount to refoulement. However, there are troubling trends to be observed besides push backs and expulsions, namely the lack of information, legal aid and access for civil society organisations available to assist asylum seekers in border procedure. This report calls for independent monitoring of the external borders.

Asylum procedures can only be carried out quickly and efficiently, if the rule of law is respected in every step of the process. In all the examined Member States investigated, people were detained when subjected to border procedures, although detention is not a solution under international and EU law for asylum seekers. Detention must always be the last resort, with judicial review and as for as short a time as possible. Through a broad political consensus, the Parliament has shown its ability and willingness to discuss, find compromise and aim for evidence-based solutions to this difficult issue.

- Text Adopted
- Greens/EFA Press Release
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Video - Erik Marquardt

Situation in Yemen

On Thursday, Members of the European Parliament adopted a resolution strongly condemning the on-going violence in Yemen. They called for an increase in humanitarian aid and urged Member States to halt arm exports to all members of the Saudi-led coalition.

- Text Adopted
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Twitter: Mounir Satouri
- Social Media - Twitter: Hannah Neumann
- Social Media - Facebook: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Facebook: Hannah Neumann
- Social Media - Instagram: Greens/EFA
- Social Media - Instagram: Greens/EFA
- Video - Hannah Neumann
- Video - Erik Marquardt
- Video - Ernest Urtasun
- Video - Jordi Solé
- Video - Mounir Satouri

_____

Ostrovets nuclear power plant

On Thursday the European Parliament voted on a resolution on the "Safety of the nuclear power plant in Ostrovets, Belarus," which borders Lithuania. The Ostrovets project does not meet international conventions and poses potential safety risks to millions. The European Commission's final assessment of the situation will likely be concluded after the commercial launch this March and before any of the EU's recommendations might be implemented by Belarus.

Bronis Ropė, Greens/EFA Member of the ITRE Committee, comments:

"We cannot compromise on safety when it comes to nuclear power. Although Ostrovets is in Belarus, it borders Vilnius, an EU capital, and any accidents could endanger millions of people across multiple countries. Nuclear power is never 100% safe. It is essential that we avoid another Chernobyl. The European Commission must pressure the Belarusian authorities to suspend the commercial launch of the nuclear power plant in March.

"The Ostrovets project is not compliant with international conventions. The Belarusian authorities have been too sluggish and disingenuous in implementing EU 'stress test' recommendations, which is unacceptable given the potential risk to peoples' safety in both Belarus and the EU. The Commission has been too lenient towards Minsk for too long. It must step up and ensure, at the very least, that all nuclear safety experts' recommendations are taken on board by the Belarusian authorities before the launch of the power plant."

- Text Adopted
- Greens/EFA Press release
- Social Media - Twitter: Greens/EFA

- Social Media - Twitter: Grace O'Sullivan
- Video - Viola von Cramon-Taubadel
- Social Media - Twitter: Grace O'Sullivan
- Video - Viola von Cramon-Taubadel
- Video - Jutta Paulus
- Video - Jakop Dalunde
- Video - Grace O'Sullivan
- Video - Bronis Ropé

Want to be kept informed?

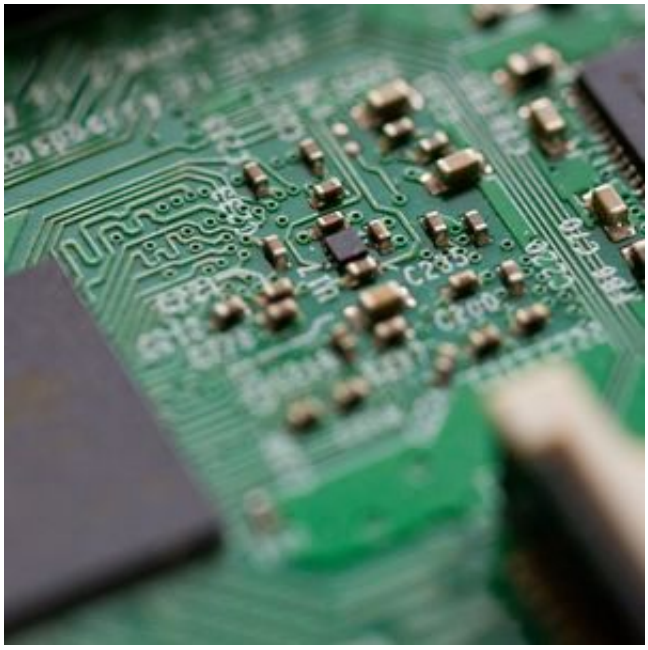
- www.greens-efa.eu
- https://www.instagram.com/greensefa/
- http://twitter.com/GreensEFA
- http://www.facebook.com/greensefa

Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 12 March 2021

Recommended

Press release

chris-ried



Digital Fairness Act falls short on addictive design

11.11.2026

Press release



[Ukrainian children in Russia: Parliament to call for u…]

11.11.2026

Press release

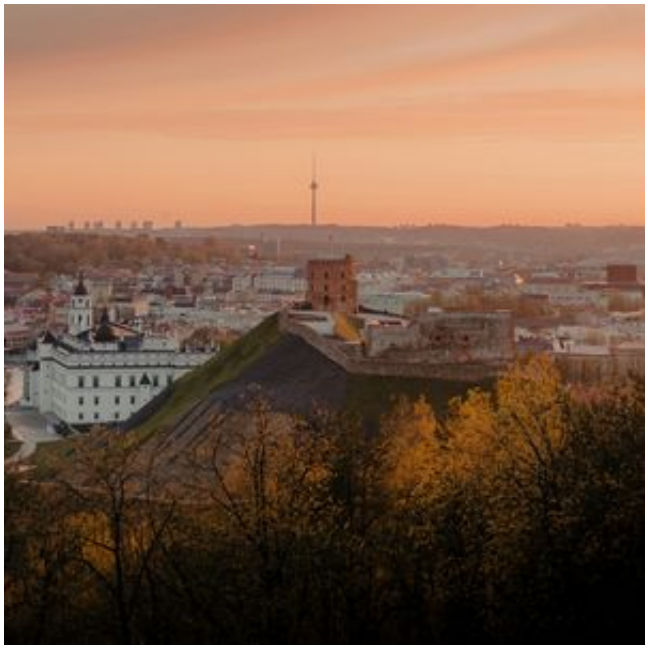
Redek Kozak



[Czech public media under attack - with Markéta Gregoro…]

11.11.2026

Press release



[Greens/EFA in Vilnius: Lithuanian Presidency must lead…]

05.11.2026

Contact person



Katy Cadwallader

Human Resources Officer



Alex Johnson

Press & Media Advisor EN (English language press)

Please share

- E-Mail