en

News | 09.07.2021

Debriefing of the July plenary session

5-9 July 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights in Hungary and Poland - *Joint debate*
- Presentation of the programme of activities of the Slovenian Presidency - *Council and Commission statements*
- General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030
- Establishment of Antarctic Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and the conservation of Southern Ocean biodiversity - *Council and Commission statements*
- Plans and actions to accelerate a transition to innovation without the use of animals in research, regulatory testing and education - *Commission statement*
- The 70th anniversary of the Geneva Convention - *Council and Commission statements*
- Hong Kong, notably the case of Apple Daily - *Motions for resolutions*
- The repression of the opposition in Turkey, specifically HDP - *Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*

Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights in Hungary and Poland - *Joint debate*

Following the Hungarian Parliament's vote to ban the teaching of LGBTIQ education and literature, advertisements and other materials under the guise of "protecting children", the European Parliament questioned the European Commission and Council on their plans to use the tools available to ensure that Hungary abides by EU law. MEPs voted in favour of a resolution on the 'Breaches of EU law and of the rights of LGBTIQ citizens in Hungary'. The Council and Commission reported on recent hearings in the General Affairs Council regarding a clear risk of a serious breach of Union values by Hungary and Poland. The Parliament previously initiated an Article 7(1) TEU procedure in respect of Hungary in 2018.

The Greens/EFA Group calls for the immediate repeal of the new Hungarian laws to protect the fundamental rights of all Hungarian citizens.We also call for the European Commission to show its commitment to safeguarding the rule of law in Hungary, and the European values to which every Member State has signed up, by utilising an infringement procedure and other tools at its disposal. We further request that the Council come forward with clear recommendations with deadlines to act for Hungary and Poland, to show that the Council can be a serious and constructive partner on the rule of law.

A cross-party letter of Hungarian and Polish national MPs was sent this week, increasing the pressure on the European Commission. It calls for the rule of law conditionality mechanism to be triggered

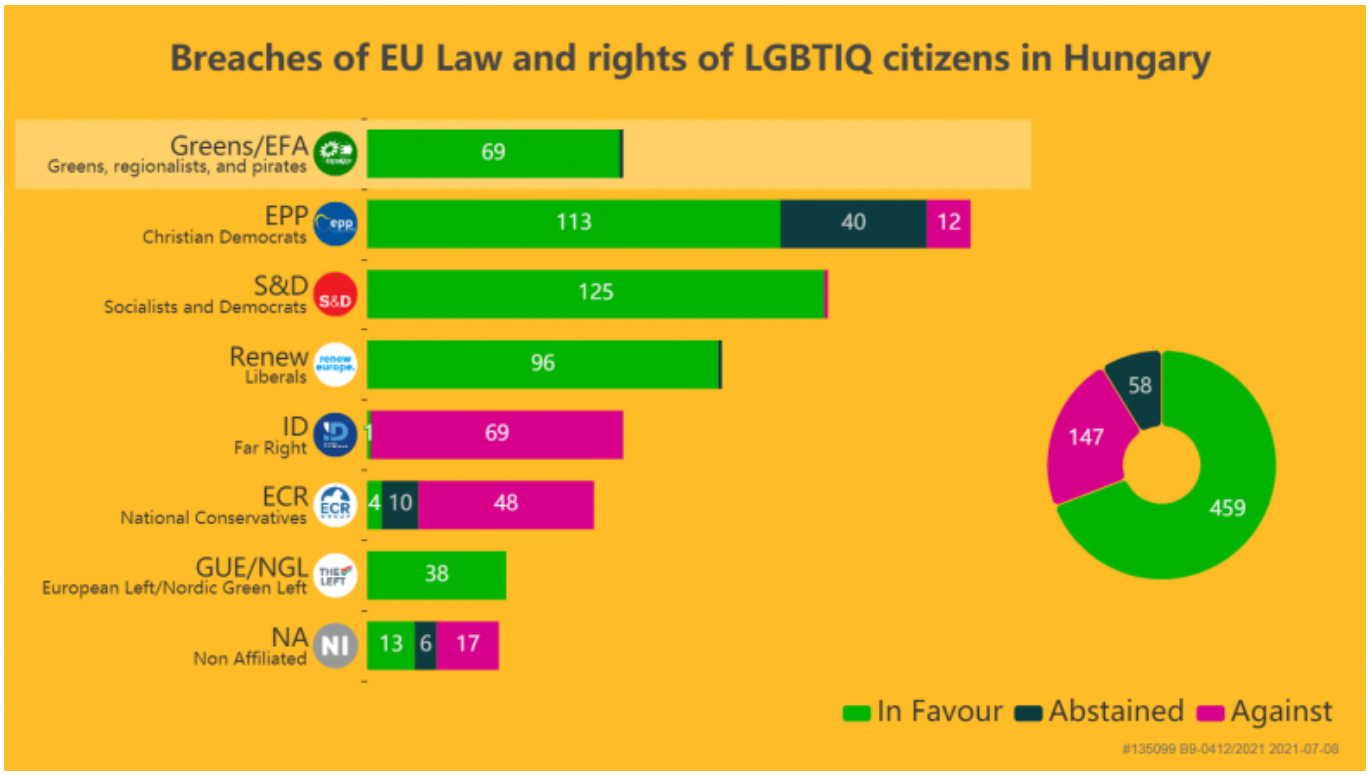
Terry Reintke MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the 'Breaches of EU law and of the rights of LGBTIQ citizens in Hungary' resolution and shadow rapporteur on Poland, comments:

"Enough is enough, we will not sit by and watch as democracy, fundamental rights and the rule of law are dismantled inside the European Union before our very eyes. Viktor Orbán is systematically attacking minorities, from refugees to LGBTIQ people, and until recently has received little more than 'concerned' reactions from the Commission and Council.

In Poland, attacks on the independence of the judiciary and measures discriminating against LGBTIQ people and women's rights must be repealed."

Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Greens/EFA MEP and European Parliament Rapporteur on the situation in Hungary, comments:

"The Slovenian Presidency must organise a new Article 7(1) hearing of the Hungarian government in order to finalise the dialogue undertaken by the Finnish and Portugese Presidencies. Then all EU countries that are serious about protecting the rule of law should issue concrete recommendations with a deadline to act for the Hungarian government."



Breaches of EU Law and rights of LGBTIQ citizens in Hungary Breaches of EU Law and rights of LGBTIQ citizens in Hungary

- Text adopted for the 'Breaches of EU law and of the rights of LGBTIQ citizens in Hungary'
- Press release
- Cross-Party letter
- Speeches by Greens/EFA MEPs : Terry Reintke ; Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield ; Sylwia Spurek ; Diana Riba I Giner ; Kim Van Sparrentak ; Damian Boeselager ; Salima Yenbou ; Marcel Kolaja
- On Twitter : Greens/EFA-Terry Reintke ; Greens/EFA-Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield ; Kim Van

Sparrentak ; Diana Riba I Giner ; Katrin Langensiepen ; Sylwia Spurek ; Tilly Metz ; Terry Reintke ; Monika Vana ; Saskia Bricmont; Karima Delli ; Rosa D'Amato

---

Presentation of the programme of activities of the Slovenian Presidency - *Council and Commission statements*

European values are under increasing pressure in Slovenia, who took over the EU Council Presidency from Portugal on Thursday 1st July. Civil society and the free press are being fiercely attacked by Prime Minister Janez Janša and an independent European judiciary is being obstructed. In recent months, the government has launched several hate and smear campaigns against numerous independent media outlets and journalists in the country. PM Janša is attempting to block the candidates for Deputy Prosecutor to the European Public Prosecutor's Office, which raises concerns over political interference in the independence of the judiciary.

Greens/EFA MEPs Daniel Freund and **Sergey Lagodinsky** recently visited the country. On Tuesday 6th July, Greens/EFA MEPs and civil society activists from Slovenia staged an action in front of the European Parliament in Strasbourg, to highlight Prime Minister Janša's attacks on civil society.

Ska Keller MEP, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, comments:

"The Slovenian Presidency must use its chance to to upgrade the EU's position from the recent insufficient climate target and focus on a massive roll-out of a green and socially just transition, starting with the negotiations on the Fit for 55 climate package"

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

"The Slovenian Presidency has already kicked off with tirades against judges and the PM's ongoing personal feud against one of the prospective European Delegated Prosecutors. This kind of behaviour does not exactly fill us with confidence that the Prime Minister will act in the best interests of the EU throughout the Presidency.

EFA President **Jordi Solé MEP** comments:

"In these crucial moments for the recovery of our economies and societies, and for building a more resilient and cohesive Union, the last thing the EU needs is more division on fundamental values, entertaining conspiracy theories, siding with those who put at stake the very values on which our Union is based - and which are by no means "imaginary".

- Press releases: Greens ; EFA
- Link to Action
- Speeches by Greens/EFA MEPs : Ska Keller ; Jordi Solé
- On Twitter: Jordi Solé ; Daniel Freund ; Ciarán Cuffe ; Anna Deparnay ; Reinhard Bütikofer ; Saskia Bricmont ; Salima Yenbou ; Greens/EFA Group

---

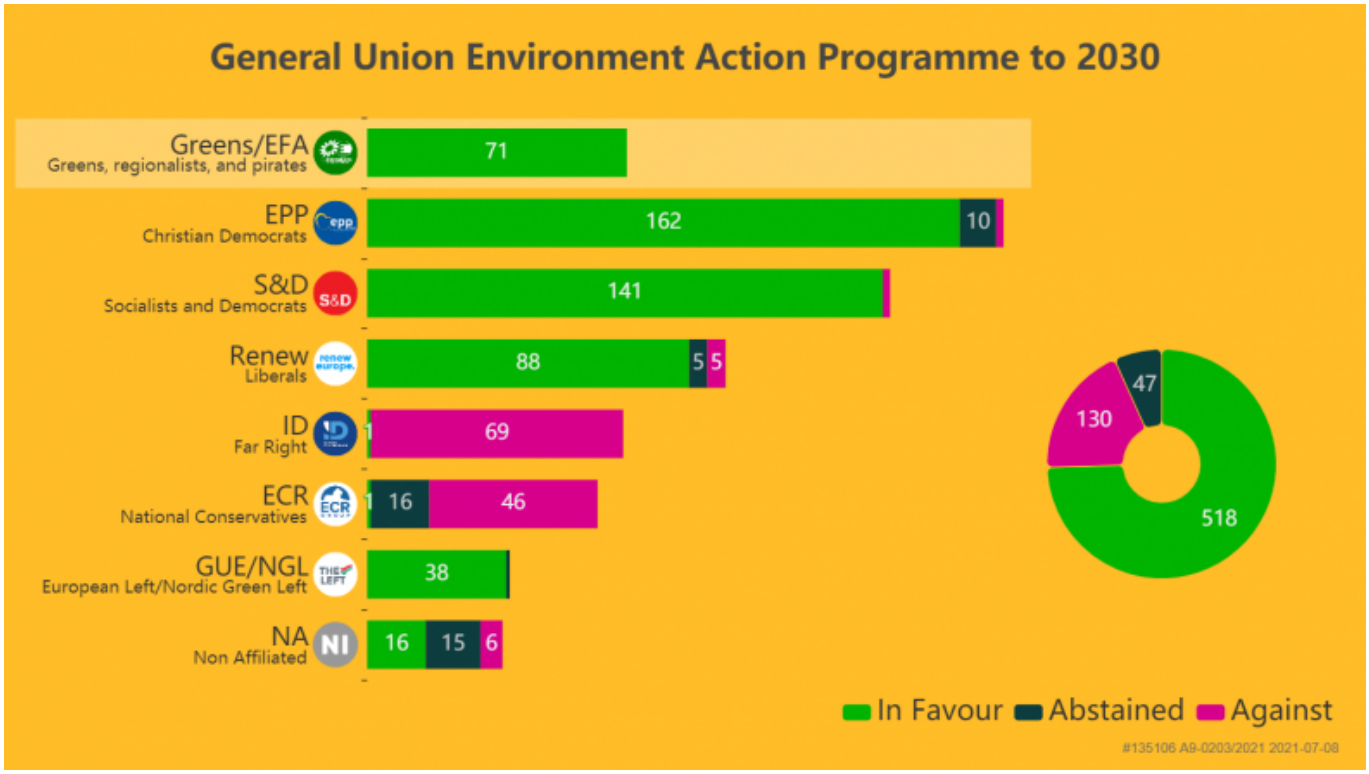
General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030

On Thursday 8th July, MEPs adopted the General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030, which builds on the European Green Deal and sets the direction for EU environmental and climate policy action for the next 10 years. This ambitious programme establishes a monitoring framework to assess the progress of Member States and the Union towards a 2050 objective of 'living well within planetary boundaries', as well as six thematic priority objectives (climate mitigation, climate adaptation, circular economy, biodiversity protection, zero pollution and reducing our environmental footprint).

The report, led by **Greens/EFA rapporteur Grace O'Sullivan**, strengthens the Commission's proposal significantly. Strong emphasis is placed on the need for systemic change in light of the ecological crises we face. It includes a call on the Commission to develop "beyond GDP" indicators to measure economic progress in terms of the wellbeing of people and planet, facilitating the transition to a sustainable wellbeing economy. The report also lays down a number of other concrete actions, including clear deadlines for the phasing out of all environmentally harmful subsidies, as well as an obligatory compatibility check for all Union measures and policies with the objectives of the programme.

Grace O'Sullivan, European Parliament's rapporteur and member of the Parliament's Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI), comments:

"I welcome the Parliament's strong endorsement of the work of myself and the shadow rapporteurs on this important file, and the fact that the Parliament has voted to set down clear legally binding deadlines for phasing out environmentally harmful subsidies, including fossil fuel subsidies. I call on the Council and Member States to also increase their ambition levels ahead of the upcoming negotiations, to reflect the urgency of the ecological crises we find ourselves in."



General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030 General Union Environment Action Programme to 2030

- Text adopted
- Press release

- Speeches by Greens/EFA MEPs: Grace O'Sullivan; Pär Holmgren; Marie Toussaint; Jutta Paulus; Ville Niinistö
- On Twitter: Grace O'Sullivan; Grace O'Sullivan; Grace O'Sullivan; Greens/EFA Group; Eleonora Evi

---

Establishment of Antarctic Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) and the conservation of Southern Ocean biodiversity - *Council and Commission statements*

Initiated by Grace O'Sullivan MEP, the resolution on the Establishment of Antarctic Marine Protected Areas and the conservation of Southern Ocean biodiversity has been approved by the European Parliament. It calls on all negotiating countries of the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) to support the decision to protect three new areas in Antarctic waters. The resolution highlights the importance of the Southern Ocean for biodiversity and climate change mitigation. It urges the Commission and Member States to increase their diplomatic efforts to convince the countries that are blocking the decision.

The Greens/EFA Group welcomes the appeal for support on protecting the new areas and believes that the European Parliament's initiative can be helpful to persuade the remaining countries to adopt the decision.

- Text adopted
- Speeches by Greens/EFA MEPs: Grace O'Sullivan; Francisco Guerreiro; Caroline Roose
- On Twitter: Greens/EFA-Caroline Roose ; Grace O'Sullivan

Plans and actions to accelerate a transition to innovation without the use of animals in research, regulatory testing and education - *Commission statement*

The European Union has made a clear commitment to proactively reduce the use of animals in science, and adopted a final objective to completely replace the use of animals with non-animal alternatives in 2010. Unfortunately, the number of such practices has decreased very slowly over the last decade.

In light of the European Green Deal, Next Generation EU, and the health and environmental challenges we are facing, it is essential that the EU acts to accelerate the transition from a reliance on the outdated animal-based model to modern, human-relevant, non-animal science in the areas of research, regulatory testing and education. Public concern about the use of animals in experiments is growing, and the EU has to provide the answer.

- *(will be voted in September)*
- Speeches by Greens/EFA MEPs: Tilly Metz; Eleonora Evi ; Francisco Guerreiro ; Caroline Roose
- On Twitter: Greens/EFA Group ; Francisco Guerreiro

The 70th anniversary of the Geneva Convention - *Council and Commission statements*

The 1951 Refugee Convention, known as the Geneva Convention, defines the term 'refugee' and sets out

the rights and duties of refugees. According to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), the EU's common policy on asylum, subsidiary protection and temporary protection must be in line with this Convention. However, the Commission's recent proposals for a new Pact on Migration, as well as developments in some Member States, have raised questions as to whether this will remain the case in practice. The 70th anniversary of the Geneva Convention is on 28th July, offering an opportunity to reassert its relevance and importance in today's context.

- Speech by Greens/EFA MEP: Damien Carême
- On Twitter: Damien Carême ; Greens/EFA Group

Hong Kong, notably the case of Apple Daily - Motions for resolutions

On Thursday 8th July, the European Parliament - by a large cross-party majority - voted in favour of a resolution regarding the closure of the pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily in Hong Kong. For the first time, MEPs have called for a political boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Reinhard Bütikofer, Greens/EFA MEP and Chair of the European Parliament's China Delegation, comments:

"*While in Hong Kong the freedoms constitutionally promised for many years are systematically eliminated by Beijing, the European Parliament demonstrates the united support for human rights as the core tenet of European foreign policy.*

In the resolution, MEPs call for government officials and diplomats to decline invitations to the Beijing 2022 Winter Games unless the Chinese government is committed to genuine improvements in the human rights situation in Hong Kong and elsewhere in China. The European Parliament is also proposing that 1 July should be observed as a day of solidarity with Hong Kong."

- Text adopted
- Press release : Greens ; EFA
- Speeches by Greens/EFA MEPs: Reinhard Bütikofer; Jordi Solé; Salima Yenbou
- On Twitter: Salima Yenbou; Reinhard Bütikofer; Greens/EFA Group

---

The repression of the opposition in Turkey, specifically HDP - *Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy*

The European Parliament voted in favour of a resolution condemning the repression of the opposition in Turkey. In fact, on Wednesday 17th March, the Chief Public Prosecutor of Turkey's top Court of Appeals requested the dissolution of the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). This was accepted by Turkey's Constitutional Court on 21st June, opening the door for a case to close the parliament's third-largest party. The context of this decision is an ongoing crackdown on Turkish political opposition, and in particular of the HDP, a shrinking space for democracy and the rule of law, and of continuous measures by the Turkish authorities aimed at silencing dissenting voices.

The Greens/EFA Group condemns the decision made by the General Assembly of the Constitutional Court, as well as the continued detention of HDP parliamentarians and functionaries, including the co-Chair, Figen Yüksekdağ, and former co-Chair, Selahattin Demirtaş. The Group calls on the Turkish authorities to immediately and unconditionally release Selahattin Demirtaş and other imprisoned members of the opposition, to drop all charges against them and to reinstate the legal status of the HDP. We urge the Turkish government to reverse its autocratic policies and to work towards strengthening democracy, rule of law, and human and civil rights, which include political pluralism, freedom of association, freedom of assembly and freedom of expression.

- Text adopted
- Speech by Greens/EFA MEP: Sergey Lagodinsky
- On Twitter: Sergey Lagodinsky

Upcoming webinars

- Genetic engineering for sustainable food systems? - 13th July at 16:00 - 17:30
- Ending Modern Day Slavery: Towards an EU Import Ban on Forced Labour - 13th July at 16:00 - 17:00
- Gender Equality and the Just Transition - 14th July at 10:30 - 12:30

Keep in touch. Follow us.

- 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: 17 September 2021

Recommended

Press release

Greens/EFA



[MEPs to debate rule of law & dismantling of Orban's re…]

24.11.2026

Press release

© marek-piwnicki

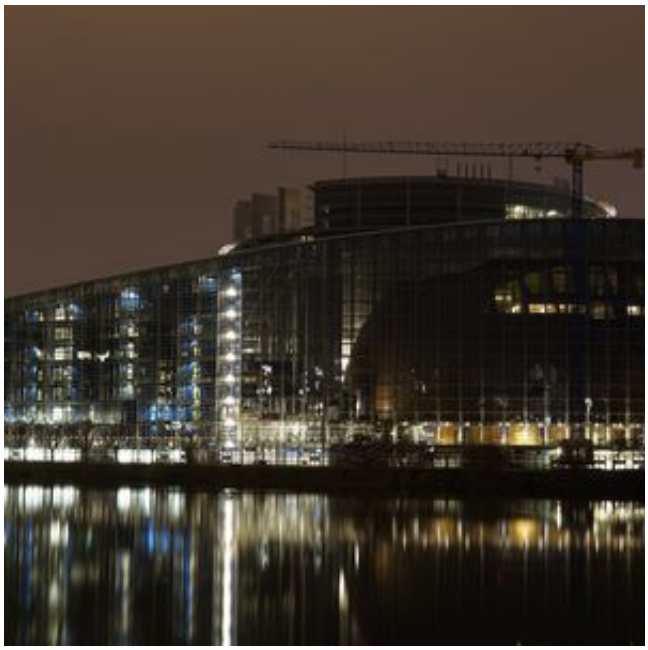


[No deal at COP31 over fights on phasing out fossil fue…]

22.11.2026

News

Dromm CC BY-NC-SA 2.0



[PLENARY FLASH: Greens/EFA Priorities 23 to 26 Novembe…]

20.11.2026

Press release

karsten-wurth-unsplash



[Court upholds EU climate rules - EU must now show lead…]

12.11.2026

Contact person



Katy Cadwallader

Human Resources Officer



Jeroen Steeman

Community manager

Please share

- E-Mail