News | 09.10.2020

Greens/EFA plenary session debriefing

4-9 October

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Climate Law

Debate and first vote, 6 Tuesday, final vote Wednesday, 7
Greens/EFA MEPs: Michael Bloss (Shadow)

The European Parliament voted in favour, Wednesday, of a 60% reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030, supporting the call of the Environment Committee and going beyond the European Commission's 55% climate target.

Bas Eickhout, Greens/EFA MEP and Vice Chair of the Environment Committee, commented:

"This is a huge success for the climate. The first European Climate Law brings the Paris climate goals closer to a reality. The European Parliament is laying the foundations for climate protection for the next 30 years. The German Council Presidency should swiftly bring the Council's position to the table so that the negotiations can be concluded as soon as possible. The EU must seize the opportunity to be a global leader at the next UN COP climate summit in Glasgow. The European Parliament is ready."

The European Parliament will now enter into negotiations with the Council and Commission with a strong position.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Video - Michael Bloss](#)
- [Video - Marie Toussaint](#)
- [Video – Bas Eickhout](#)
- [Video - Pär Holmgren](#)
- [Video - Grace O'Sullivan](#)
- [Video - Jutta Paulus](#)
- [Video - Thomas Waitz](#)
- [Social media](#)
- [#VoteForClimate photo action](#)
- [Social media – Climate Law explained](#)
- [More: Commission impact assessment](#)

Further information
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Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights Mechanism

Debate, 5 Monday
Greens/EFA MEP: Sergey Lagodinsky (Shadow)

The European Parliament adopted, Wednesday, by an overwhelming majority, a resolution calling for the "Establishment of an EU Mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights" (DRF). With the new mechanism proposal, EP reasserts its role in the fight for liberal democracy. MEPs reaffirm their commitment to establish a comprehensive approach to Union values instead of inefficient instruments split across different fields. Our Group welcomes the report and believes the involvement of independent experts will improve the credibility of the mechanism. Only a comprehensive approach covering all Union values is able to change the current situation, where they lack respect.

Sergey Lagodinsky MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the Establishment of an EU Mechanism on Democracy, the Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights, commented:

"While the Commission's rule of law report of last week is welcome, it's nothing more than a list with no specific proposals for action, reading like a think tank report. Today's vote in the Parliament is calling for the Commission and Council to get operational and more effective."

"We are calling for a consolidation of the existing tools in one democracy, rule of law and fundamental rights mechanism with a strong role for the Parliament. It must be accompanied by a much-needed budgetary conditionality based on reverse qualified majority voting. This will allow the EU to limit funding of those Member States who disregard the core democratic values of the Union."

- [Text adopted](#)

- [Press release](#)
- [Video – Sergey Lagodinsky](#)
- [Video - Sylwia Spurek](#)
- [Social Media](#)
- [More: Commission report shows urgent need for rule of law mechanism](#)

Further information
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Rule of Law and Fundamental Rights in Bulgaria

Debate and vote, 5 Monday
Greens/EFA MEPs: Ska Keller (Shadow)

MEPs adopted a resolution Thursday on the rule of law and fundamental rights in Bulgaria. This text, adopted in the LIBE committee tackles the deteriorating situation in Bulgaria in respect to the principles of the rule of law, democracy and fundamental rights, including the independence of the judiciary, separation of powers, the fight against corruption, and freedom of the media. The resolution denounces the lack of corruption investigations, calls for increased transparency regarding media ownership and distribution networks, condemns any kind of violence against peaceful demonstrations, denounces the spread of hate speech and violence against people of Romani origin, women, LGBTI people and other minorities, and calls for cooperation between the Bulgarian Government and the European Commission.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Video – Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield](#)

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Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) and the rule of law

Debate, 5 Monday
Greens/EFA MEP: Daniel Freund

MEPs held a debate Monday on the conditionality of the rule of Law in the framework of the MFF 2021-2027. In July, the European Parliament adopted a strong resolution concerning the MFF, Own Resources and the Recovery Plan. The Greens/EFA re-affirms support for this strong position by the European Parliament, including the need for a strong and effective rule of law conditionality in the MFF negotiations. The rule of law mechanism proposed by the German Council Presidency is weak and will have no concrete effect. The European Parliament will continue fighting for a meaningful rule of law deficiencies regulation, the increase in programs for health, digitization and democracy and a binding climate quota of at least 30% in the EU budget.

- [Video – Daniel Freund](#)
- [Video - Alexandra Geese](#)
- [Video – Terry Reintke](#)
- [Video - Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield](#)
- [Video - Tineke Strik](#)
- [More: European Parliament stands up for the rule of law and future generations](#)

Further information

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Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee

Debate and vote, 5 Monday
Greens/EFA MEP: Kira Peter-Hansen (Shadow)

The European Parliament voted in favour, Thursday, of a resolution to reinforce the Youth Guarantee, which includes all Greens/EFA priorities.

With this text, the European Parliament calls on the Youth Guarantee to be made a right, not a choice for Member States. The resolution also condemns the practice of unpaid internships, apprenticeships and traineeships, asking for a legal instrument to ensure fair remuneration.

This text is a reaction to the package proposed by the Commission in July: "Youth Unemployment Support", that included a reinforced youth guarantee in the form of a new Council Recommendation "A Bridge to Jobs - Reinforcing the Youth Guarantee".

The resolution criticises the Council for cutting youth unemployment funding under the ESF+ and calls on the Commission to propose a Youth Guarantee binding instrument. Some of the key demands are a quality framework for youth guarantee offers, skills for the Green Deal, and quality traineeships.

The updated Youth Guarantee covers people from 15 to 29 years old and steps up the outreach to vulnerable young people across the EU.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Social media](#)

Further information
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Forest Strategy

Debate and vote, 6 Tuesday
Greens/EFA MEP: Margrete Auken (Shadow)

MEPs adopted Wednesday the new EU Forest Strategy, an initiative report from the AGRI committee that sets out the Parliament's position on the upcoming Commission's strategy. Regrettably, the report was adopted without any amendments.

The Greens/EFA Group regrets the questionable logic behind the classification of wood as a renewable source of energy in the Renewable Energy Directive, which has led to a sharp increase in wood extraction in the past years.

The report does not take the necessary positions to curb these concerning trends and is mainly advocating for business as usual, pushing for a growth of the woody biomass for energy sector and relying on inefficient systems to limit the negative impact. The report is also far too weak on the need to protect more of the EU forests, in contradiction with the Biodiversity Strategy.

It is worrying that a majority of MEPs seem to think burning wood for energy production is a good way to contribute to climate mitigation. Our Group is calling for climate and biodiversity enhancement, the conservation of primary forests and recognising the important role of forest ecosystems in our world.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Video – Anna Deparnay-Gunenberg](#)
- [Video - Marie Toussaint](#)
- [Video - Thomas Waitz](#)
- [Video - Jutta Paulus](#)
- [Video - Martin Hausling](#)
- [Social media](#)

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Approval of McGuinness and Dombrovskis

Vote, 7 Wednesday
Greens/EFA MEPs: Heidi Hautala (Dombrovskis), Sven Giegold (McGuinness)

The European Parliament approved Mairead McGuinness as the new Commissioner in charge of Financial Services and Financial Stability, and Valdis Dombrovskis as the new Trade Commissioner. The Greens/EFA group voted in favour of Mrs. McGuinness but abstained on Mr. Dombrovskis.

While showing general openness and a good level of commitment towards the Green/EFA group key demand to mainstream the EU Green Deal and climate goals into trade and investment agreements, Mr

Dombrovskis has fallen short of putting forward concrete proposals we urgently need. In the present context of climate crisis, the we will engage with Mr Dombrovskis constructively and consistently to pursue this major goal. In particular, we noted positively the commitment not to put the Mercosur Agreement forward for ratification in its present form.

- [Text adopted – Approval of Mr. Dombrovskis](#)
- [Text adopted – Approval of Mrs. McGuinness](#)

Further information

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Fight against money laundering following the FinCEN files

Debate, 8 Thursday
Greens/EFA MEPs: Sven Giegold (ECON) and Saskia Bricmont (LIBE)

On the initiative of the Greens/EFA group, the Parliament debated, Thursday, the recent FinCEN leak of files, released by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), which revealed large multinational banks involvement in money laundering operations linked to organised crime. These FinCEN files provide detailed data that includes criminal transactions at major banks such as HSBC and Deutsche Bank. The Greens/EFA group are calling on EU governments to end their blockade of a European financial intelligence unit in order to prosecute financial crime at the European level.

- [Video – Sven Giegold](#)
- [Video – Saskia Bricmont](#)
- [Video – Claude Gruffat](#)
- [Video – Kira Peter-Hansen](#)
- [Video – Ernest Urtasun](#)
- [Video - Henrike Hahn](#)
- [Social media](#)
- [More: Revelations about government failures must be a wake-up call](#)

Further information
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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- [Eritrea, the case Dawit Isaak](#)

- [Situation of Ethiopian migrants in detention centres in Saudi Arabia](#)
- ["Foreign Agents" Law in Nicaragua](#)

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 23 October 2020

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