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News | 20.01.2012

## **Greens/EFA Round-up**

### **Debriefing of the plenary session Strasbourg 16-19 January 2012**

#### **Conclusions of the European Council meeting (8-9 December 2011) on a draft international agreement on a Fiscal Stability Union**

*European Council and Commission statements*

*Plenary debate 13 December 2011*

*Round of political group speakers and vote Wednesday 18 January 2012*

The European Parliament today adopted a resolution on the Euro crisis and the draft intergovernmental agreement, which was proposed by the December EU summit. Negotiations on the draft agreement are in their final stages but the Greens believe the final text will fail to deliver the necessary crisis response and believe the EP should take the initiative to provide a comprehensive response, specifically through providing an effective firewall in the short-run, the creation of Eurobonds, a Financial Transaction Tax and a meaningful growth and employment strategy in line with EU 2020 objectives. Instead of a failing intergovernmental approach that lacks due democratic process, the community method must be central to a coherent, solidarity-based European response. The joint resolution agreed by the four largest groups on the draft international agreement on a fiscal stability union was adopted by 521 votes in favour, 124 against and 50 abstentions.

- [Greens/EFA motion for a resolution](#)
- [Text adopted by EP](#)
- [Plenary speech by Green Co-President Daniel Cohn-Bendit](#)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)

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### **Recent political developments in Hungary**

The assaults of the Orban government on the freedom of press, the independence of the judiciary, the independence of the national bank and the severe restrictions to political pluralism are a serious and persistent breach of basic European values and rights. The Greens have called for a procedure to be launched under Article 7 of the EU Treaty to examine whether Hungary is in breach of EU fundamental values. The European Commission issued an assessment of the compatibility of the new Hungarian constitution and implementing 'cardinal laws' with EU law. The Greens welcomed the assessment and the decision to launch infringement proceedings against Hungary for the proposed reforms threatening the independence of the judiciary, the central bank and the data protection authority. However, the Greens expressed their concern that the Commission's assessment fails to address other cardinal laws, which will undermine political and media pluralism in Hungary. The Greens will therefore continue to try to convince a majority of MEPs in the Civil Liberties Committee to launch an Art. 7 procedure against Hungary for serious breaches of Fundamental Rights in the Hungarian Constitution. To be followed.

- [Plenary speech by Green Co-President Daniel Cohn-Bendit](#)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)

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## **Waste electrical and electronic equipment**

*Legislative report*

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

*Plenary debate Wednesday 18 January 2012 - vote Thursday 19 January 2012*

The European Parliament adopted a final legislative compromise revising EU rules on waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE). The Greens welcomed the strengthening of the existing legislation - including steps to clamp down on illegal shipments of WEEE to non-OECD countries - but regretted that the revision did not go further. The revised rules represent an important step forward as improved collection and recycling of WEEE will reduce environmentally unsound treatment and enable the mining of waste electrical/electronic components, improving resource efficiency. The Greens support the increase of collection targets but believe quicker application of the higher targets would have been better for the environment and the economy. The group regrets the failure to include either separate reuse targets or recycling targets based on what is actually recycled but is happy that the door to both remains open in the future. The Greens voted in favour of this report.

- [Text adopted by EP](#) (Word format only)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)

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## Placing on the market and use of biocidal products

*Legislative report*

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

*Plenary debate Wednesday 18 January 2012 - vote Thursday 19 January 2012*

The European Parliament adopted a final legislative agreement revising EU rules on biocides - substances aiming to kill or deter harmful organisms - dealing with product approvals and active substances in the products. The Greens have pushed to ensure that the most harmful substances, including endocrine disrupters, are no longer used in biocidal products in principle.

Under the legislation approved today, exceptions to this rule can only be given when a substance is essential to control a serious danger or non-approval would have disproportionate impacts. In addition, serious consideration always has to be given to the availability of alternative substances or technologies. The adopted rules also mention that consumers will get information about the biocidal treatment of articles either via labelling or via information from suppliers and nanomaterials will now be regulated comprehensively, including specific approval of the active substance, separate assessment (based on adequate test methods) and labelling.

The Greens voted in favour and believe that the vote of this legislative agreement represents a step forward for public health.

- [Text adopted by EP](#) (Word format only)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)

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## Farm input supply chain

*Own-initiative report by **Green MEP José Bové***

*Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*

*Plenary debate and vote Thursday 19 January 2012*

The European Parliament adopted the Bové report on farm input supply chain. The report highlights the growing dependence of farmers on an ever more concentrated farm input industry, and the squeeze they face in most sectors between rising costs for inputs and low farm gate prices. The report calls on the Commission to encourage more efficient agronomic practices and improved, sustainable agricultural resource management, with the aim of producing stable and productive agriculture, reducing input costs and nutrient wastage and increasing innovation, resource efficiency and effectiveness and sustainability within farming systems and stresses the need for an integrated approach for farmers which brings balance in all areas of farming (production, environment, profitability, social dimension). Among others, the report suggests:

- to cut back fertiliser expenditure and nutrient run-off through better crop rotation and diversification

practices, which also prevent pollution of aquatic environments and NO<sub>2</sub> (nitrous oxide) loss to the atmosphere.

- to maintain the possibility for farmers to use farm-produced and farm-processed seed and to ensure an adequate balance between the need for innovation and the preservation and enhancement of crop diversity as well as the improvement of the livelihoods of small- and medium-scale farmers
- investments in energy saving in buildings, farming practices, transport etc. focussing on local energy systems (wind, solar, biogas, geothermal, etc)

- [Text adopted by EP](#) (Word format only)
- [Plenary speech by Green MEP José Bové](#)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)

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## **Avoiding food wastage**

*Own-initiative report*

*Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development*

*Plenary vote Thursday 19 January 2012*

The report was adopted by the European Parliament with a huge majority. As much of 50% of the food produced in the EU is wasted and the report sets out steps to deal with this problem. With food availability a mounting global issue, tackling food wastage is vital. Merely blindly intensifying production using the current high-input industrial model is not the answer, as this approach would undermine long term food security. The Greens support the main theme of the report, which highlights the need to focus on the supply chain and localised supply as key to reducing food wastage.

- [Text adopted by EP](#) (Word format only)

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**AND ALSO**

## **New EP President**

Martin Schulz, former President of the Socialist Group (S&D), was elected President of the European Parliament with 387 votes in favour out of 670 cast, during the first ballot round.

Other candidates, Nirj Deva (ECR, UK) and Diana Wallis (ALDE, UK) got 142 and 141 votes

respectively.

## **Green EP Vice-Presidency**

Isabelle Durant (Greens/EFA, BE) was reelected as Vice-President of the European Parliament. Vice-Presidents are Members of the European Parliament Bureau.

The Bureau is the body that lays down rules for Parliament. It draws up Parliament's preliminary draft budget and decides administrative, staff and organisational matters.

## **Danish Presidency of the EU**

The Danish Prime Minister Helle Thorning-Schmidt was in the European Parliament to present the Danish presidency's six-month working programme.

See

- [Plenary speech by Green Co-President Rebecca Harms](#)
- [Danish Presidency website](#)

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*Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up : 3 February 2012*

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Marek Piwnicki auf Unsplash



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**Responsible MEPs**





José Bové

Member



Rebecca Harms

Member



Martin Häusling

Member

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