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News | 21.04.2012

Greens/EFA Round-up

Debriefing of the plenary session Strasbourg 17-20 April 2012

Situation in Syria

Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Plenary debate Tuesday 17 April - No resolution In spite of an EU arms embargo prohibiting the sale, supply, transfer or export of arms to Syria from EU member states, there have been two reported cases of possible violations by EU member states this year, with the latest occurring a few days ago. The Greens/EFA group distributed an open letter on these reports to their fellow MEPs before a plenary debate on the humanitarian crisis in Syria on Tuesday evening. High Representative Catherine Ashton was then hand delivered the letter during the debate. The EU needs to get to the bottom of these reports, do all it can to mitigate the humanitarian crisis and fully support the people of Syria, with a view to ultimately ensuring the end of the odious regime and a peaceful democratic transition.

- Greens/EFA press release
- No Arms for Assad! - News Article
- Greens/EFA open letter to Catherine Ashton
- Plenary speech by Green MEP Franziska Brantner, and delivering letter to Catherine Ashton
- Photos of Greens/EFA action (Facebook - Flickr)
- Note on the implementation of the EU arms embargo
- Latest text adopted by EP on Syria (16 February 2012)

Further information:
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Coordination of social security systems

Legislative report
Committee on Employment and Social Affairs
Plenary debate Wednesday 18 April - vote Thursday 19 April 2012 MEPs adopted an agreement revising EU rules on social security systems to close a number of loopholes under the current legislation. In particular, the rules were changed to ensure highly mobile flight personnel will not be forced to accept minimalist social security provisions. The loophole, which was exploited by a few low cost carriers, enabled airlines to register staff at their PO Box office in member states with cheap or limited social

security systems. This will no longer be possible.

- Greens/EFA press release
- Text adopted by EP

Further information:
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Means to combat the economic crisis, particularly in the Eurozone

Statement by the President of the Commission
Plenary debate Wednesday 18 April 2012 The Greens have long argued that the one-sided focus on austerity in the Euro crisis response has made the situation worse and that there needs to be a much greater focus on measures to turn the economy around, including clamping down on tax fraud and evasion.
The European Commission presented two communications outlining proposals for job creation in Europe in response to the crisis and to job creation and economic recovery in Greece and underlined the potential for job creation in the green economy.
The Greens welcomed the fact that the Commission is starting to shift in focus from fiscal rebalancing, even though at at too slow pace, but cautioned that the proposals will have to be implemented by EU member states. The energy efficiency sector alone could create 5 million jobs by 2020, so EU member states should adopt ambitious legislation along the lines of the proposals adopted by the EP. Member states should also follow the recommendation to shift taxes away from labour and towards resource use.

- Video of the plenary speech of Greens/EFA Co-President Rebecca Harms and Green MEP Nikos Chrysogelos
- Greens/EFA press release
- Web article "The Green troika in Athens"

Further information:
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Common consolidated corporate tax base

Consultation procedure
Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
Plenary debate Wednesday 18 April - vote Thursday 19 April 2012 The European Parliament voted to endorse and improve legislative proposals for an EU common consolidated base for corporate tax (CCCTB) with view of making it binding for, which was not forseen by the proposal. The Greens have long supported the introduction of a binding EU CCCTB and welcomed the vote.
The EP followed the compromise reached in the ECON Committee around a Green amendment calling for a mandatory CCCTB for all large enterprises, whilst leaving small and medium sized enterprises the option to choose to apply the common base if they wish.
A common corporate tax base would ensure greater transparency on corporate tax in the EU and reduce the scope for tax evasion, as well as reducing the administrative burden for tax compliant cross border firms. For the Greens, the CCCTB must only be the first step for tackling tax evasion and dumping in Europe, and must be followed up by a minimum corporate tax rate.

- Plenary speech by Green MEP Philippe Lamberts
- Text adopted by EP
- Greens/EFA press release

Further information:
Michael Schmitt, Greens/EFA Advisor on Economic and Monetary Affairs,
michael.schmitt@europarl.europa.eu _____

Taxation of energy products and electricity

Consultation procedure
Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
Plenary debate Wednesday 18 April - vote Thursday 19 April 2012 The EP voted on proposed EU legislation on energy taxation, which sets out minimum European rates, notably with a view to introducing EU-level carbon taxation and stopping the favouring of certain fuels like diesel, while providing the price signals and energy efficiency incentives needed to spur innovation. Unfortunately, the plenary succumbed to intense lobbying and the Greens criticised the outcome of the vote, which calls for the prolonging of some of the key loopholes in the current legislation. Most notably, there is a perverse preference given to diesel and the exclusion of aviation fuel, giving air transport a distorted competitive advantage over more sustainable modes of transport such as rail.

- Plenary speech by Green MEP Bas Eickhout (NL)
- Text adopted by EP
- Greens/EFA press release

Further information:
Michael Schmitt, Greens/EFA Advisor on Economic and Monetary Affairs,
michael.schmitt@europarl.europa.eu _____

Risk sharing instruments for Member States experiencing or threatened with serious difficulties with respect to their financial stability

Legislative report
Committee on Regional Development
Plenary debate Wednesday 18 April - vote Thursday 19 April 2012 The European Parliament today adopted a legislative agreement aimed at making the use of EU structural funds easier in EU member states in fiscal difficulties and in receipt of rescue funds. Under the plans, crisis countries could use parts of their EU funds to mobilise increased loan financing for private promoters of projects, in cooperation with the European Investment Bank. The Greens overall support the introduction of a risk sharing instruments to assist member states affected by the crisis, but believe that the plans fail to provide for proper quality checks on projects and fail to ensure funds are not given to unsustainable projects. The EU money should help fostering green and sustainable development in crisis countries such as Greece. All Greens/EFA amendments were rejected. Green MEPs abstained in the final vote.

- Text adopted by EP
- Greens/EFA press release

Further information:
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EU-USA agreement on the use and transfer of PNR to the US Department of Homeland Security

Non-legislative report
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Plenary debate and vote Thursday 19 April 2012 A majority of MEPs voted to reverse the European Parliament's long-standing role in defence of EU citizens' civil liberties and to endorse intrusive big brother style surveillance. The positive vote on the EU-US PNR deal, which came in spite of the fact that fundamental concerns previously outlined by the EP and European courts have not been addressed, will mean US authorities will be able to continue to retain private information about and profile innocent EU airline passengers. Before the vote, Greens/EFA MEPs staged an action outside the hemicycle to try and convince other groups to reject the agreement. In the end however, they were outnumbered by the decision of the Conservatives, Social Democrats and a third of the Liberals to vote in favour.

- Plenary speech by Green MEP Jan Philipp Albrecht
- Text adopted by EP
- Greens/EFA press release
- No to PNR! Video of the joint action

Further information:
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Draft amending budget no 1/2012: financing of ITER

Report - Budgetary procedure
Committee on Budgets
Plenary debate Thursday 19 April 2012 - vote Friday 20 April 2012 The European Parliament today voted in favour of a deal, giving the go-ahead for the release of the first tranche of additional funding for the budget of the ITER nuclear fusion project, totalling €650 million for 2012. The Greens have criticised the decision to allocate additional public funds to the ITER budget, which has expanded far beyond forecasts. The Greens believe no further EU funds should be channelled to the runaway budget of this project. With national budgets already under pressure, the priority for public funding should instead be to promote safe and sustainable technologies like renewables and energy efficiency, which will deliver a real economic impact and job growth in the short term. The Greens will continue to push for the exclusion of ITER from the EU budget. All the major parliamentary groups except the Greens/EFA voted in favour.

- Plenary speech by Green MEP Isabelle Durant
- Text adopted by EP (provisional Word version)
- Greens/EFA press release

Further information:
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Women and climate change

Own-initiative report by Green MEP Nicole Kiil-Nielsen
Committee on Women's Rights and Gender equality
Plenary debate and vote Friday 20 April 2012 The European Parliament adopted with a large majority (418 votes in favour, 87 against and 36 absentions) the report by Green draftsperson Nicole Kiil-Nielsen on women and climate change. The report highlights findings that show women are worse affected by the impacts of climate change (85% of people who die as a result of climate-induced natural disasters are women, 75% of environmental refugees are women) and proposes measures to address this, such as including gender equality in climate change policies and greater inclusion of women in decision-making on climate change in the EU.

- Plenary speech by Green rapporteur Nicole Kiil-Nielsen
- Draft report
- Text adopted by EP (provisional Word version)
- Greens/EFA press release (FR)
- Article on Women and climate change

Further information:
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AND ALSO

The European Parliament adopted a motion for resolution on :

- **situation in Mali** (see text adopted - see Greens/EFA motion for a resolution)
- **situation in Burma-Myanmar** (see text adopted - see Greens/EFA motion for a resolution)

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- www.greens-efa.eu
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- www.youtube.com/greensefa
- www.twitter.com/greensep
- www.stopclimatechange.net

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up : 11 May 2012

Recommended

Press release



EU caves in to the fossil fuel lobby

19.11.2026

Press release

@Alex Johnson



COP31 draft fails on fossil fuels

19.11.2026

Press release

karsten-wurth-unsplash

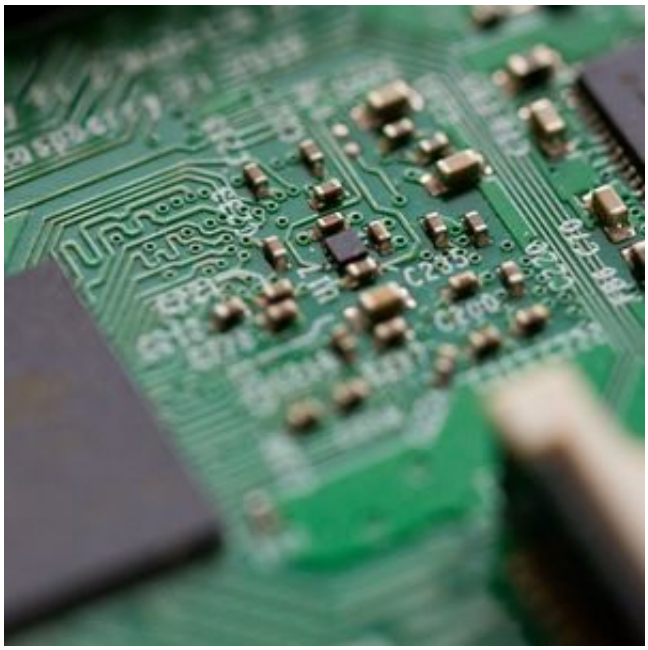


Court upholds EU climate rules - EU must now show lead…

12.11.2026

Press release

chris-ried



Digital Fairness Act falls short on addictive design

11.11.2026

Responsible MEPs



Jan Philipp Albrecht

Member



Rebecca Harms

Member



Philippe Lamberts

Member

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