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News | 30.03.2012

Greens/EFA Round-up

Debriefing of the week and plenary session 26-30 March 2012

EU-US passenger data (PNR) agreement

Vote in the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE) - Tuesday 27 March 2012 The European Parliament civil liberties committee voted to recommend the EP give its consent to a controversial draft EU-US passenger data (PNR) agreement, overturning the recommendation of the EP rapporteur. The Greens hit out at the vote, which ignored the fact that fundamental rights concerns raised by the EP and courts in Europe have not been addressed in the current draft agreement, notably as regards the lengthy retention periods for data, as well as the problem of profiling of individuals.
Recently, the Greens/EFA MEP Jan Philipp Albrecht presented a study by two legal experts showing that the new agreement with the United States on the transfer, retention and profiling of air passenger data (PNR) is in breach of EU fundamental rights provisions

- Greens/EFA press release
- New study by legal experts

Further information:
Wouter Van Ballegooij Greens/EFA Advisor on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs,
wouter.vanballegooij@europarl.europa.eu _____

Greens/EFA Co-Presidents' visit to Athens

Tuesday 27 March 2012 In the context of the financial and Eurocrisis and after the second Greek bailout at the end of last month, aGreen delegation made up of Greens/EFA Co-Presidents Dany Cohn-Bendit and Rebecca Harms and Green MEP Nikos Chrysogelos held a series of high-level meetings in order to debate the latest developments of the situation and seek to further explore alternatives in Athens. As well as meeting 30 representatives of the Greek Greens, economic and social stakeholders, trade unions, SMEs and NGOs, the Green delegation also had constructive discussions with Prime Minister, Mr Lucas Papademos, Foreign Minister Stavros Dimas and the Governor of the Bank of Greece, Mr Georgios Provopoulos.

- Read the web article
- Read 'Greek crisis and a Green way out' (Nikos Chrysogelos' paper)

Further information:

Vula Tsetsi, Greens/EFA Secretary General, paraskevi.tsetsi@europarl.europa.eu

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Anti-counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA)

Vote in the Committee on International Trade (INTA) - Tuesday 27 March 2012 The European Parliament is set to continue with the ratification process for the Anti-counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA) and the foreseen timetable with a view to taking a decision as regards whether or not to give its consent by the summer. MEPs on the EP trade committee decided not to push for a separate referral of ACTA to the European Court of Justice, following a decision by the Commission to refer the agreement. The Greens/EFA group welcomed the decision. To be continued.

- Greens/EFA press release
- Read the latest web article

Further information:
Martin Köhler, Greens/EFA Advisor on International Trade, martin.koehler@europarl.europa.eu

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EU enlargement reports : Serbia, Kosovo and Turkey

Council and Commission statements
Plenary debate Wednesday 28 March 2012 - vote Thursday 29 March 2012 > The European Parliament adopted a report assessing Serbia's progress towards EU membership, just one month after the decision to grant EU candidate status to the country. The Greens supported the EP report, which welcomed the candidate status decision but highlighted the need for Serbia to continue with its reform efforts. However, the group criticises the failure of the Serbian government so far to submit the officially signed International Boder Managment (IBM) agreement with Kosovo, which was a condition of the decision on candidate status.

- Greens/EFA press release
- Plenary speech by Green MEP Franziska Brantner
- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)

> With a higher majority than previous years, the European Parliament also adopted a report by Green rapporteur/draftsperson Ulrike Lunacek assessing Kosovo's progress towards the EU. The report calls on the EU to give Kosovo a real and palpable accession perspective, such as through a roadmap for visa liberalisation and continuous steps towards a Stabilisation and Association Agreement. The report stresses the importance of upgrading Kosovo’s representation within international cultural and heritage institutions and sports organisations. On the other hand, the report makes clear that Kosovo needs to do more to fight corruption and organised crime and swiftly implement promised electoral reforms. It also raises concerns over political interference in the work of media. All the Greens/EFA amendments updating the text were adopted.

- Greens/EFA press release
- Plenary speech by Green rapporteur Ulrike Lunacek
- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)

> The European Parliament adopted by a large majority the 2011 progress Report on Turkey. The adopted text is a clear message sent to the Turkish authorities, political actors and civil society to commit themselves to a deepening of the rule of law in Turkey.
By adopting this resolution, the European Parliament expresses its strong concerns over the anti-terrorist law, which is a threat to press freedom, freedom of association, freedom of demonstration. The European

Parliament calls for a thorough reform of this law, particularly sections 6 and 7, it also supports judicial reform and calls for political dialogue for the development of a new constitution. This report highlights the urgent need for Turkey to find a political solution to the Kurdish question.

- Greens/EFA press release (in French and German)
- Plenary speech by Green MEP and Chair of the EU- Turkey Delegation EU-Turkey Hélène Flautre
- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)

Further information:
Paolo Bergamaschi, Greens/EFA adviser on Foreign Affairs, paolo.bergamaschi@europarl.europa.eu
Ali Yurttagül, Greens/EFA adviser on Turkey related issues, ali.yurttaguel@europarl.europa.eu

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Rights of people travelling by air

*Own-initiative report by **Green MEP Keith Taylor***
Committee on Transport and Tourism
Plenary vote Thursday 29 March 2012 The European Parliament adopted with a large majority (509 in favour, 20 against, 53 abstentions) a report calling for more EU action to strengthen air passenger rights by Green rapporteur (draftsperson) Keith Taylor. The report calls for strengthening rules regarding assistance and reimbursement for delays and cancellations (including for luggage delays). The report also highlights the need to better enforce existing rules to ensure transparent pricing on airline websites, proposes harmonising rules on hand luggage allowances, and for online customers to have the right to amend bookings. The report also addresses the problems faced by persons with disabilities and reduced mobility, with a view to ensuring barrier-free access to air transport. Crucially, from a Green perspective, it also calls for better information on the environmental performance and impact of air journeys (environmental impact to be printed on tickets as well as being clearly visible on airlines' websites).

- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)
- Greens/EFA press release

Further information:
Paul Beeckmans, Greens/EFA adviser on Transport and Tourism, paul.beeckmans@europarl.europa.eu

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Derivatives, central counterparties and trade repositories

Legislative report
Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
Plenary vote Thursday 29 March 2012 The European Parliament adopted new EU legislation on over-the-counter derivative products, based on a legislative agreement reached in February. The Greens welcome the creation of a regulatory framework which will ensure that the majority of privately traded over-the-counter derivatives will be standardised and traded through central counterparties, which will create greater stability in the financial system. However, for the Greens, a major shortcoming of the new legislation is the failure to ensure a more comprehensive role for the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA) in regulating central counterparty clearing houses (CCPs) . The adopted text also ignores the recommendations of the European systemic risk committee (ESRB), which argued for more powers for regulators to intervene to prevent systemic problems. As such, this represents a missed opportunity for more comprehensive EU regulation.

- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)
- Greens/EFA press release
- Plenary speech by Green MEP Pascal Canfin (July 2011)

Further information:
Francisco Padilla, Advisor on Economic and Monetary Affairs, francisco.padilla@europarl.europa.eu

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European Refugee Fund 2008 to 2013

Recommendation for second reading - report by Green MEP Rui Tavares
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE)
Plenary debate Wednesday 28 March 2012 - vote Thursday 29 March 2012 The European Parliament adopted new EU legislation aimed at assisting EU member states in improving their ability and capacity to receive refugees. The legislation, which was steered through Parliament by Green MEP and draftsperson Rui Tavares, includes changes to the European Refugee Fund to take account of a new joint resettlement fund. Under the proposals approved by the EP, the EU will play a more active role in assisting refugees through the new joint resettlement programme, which aims to resettle people in the EU who have been granted refugee status in third countries that lack the capacity to offer proper protection. In order to facilitate this, the scope of the European Refugee Fund will be extended to ensure a wider group of vulnerable persons can be eligible.

- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)
- Greens/EFA press release
- Plenary speech by Green rapporteur Rui Tavares
- Resettlement of refugees in the EU - Rui Tavares' publication

Further information:
Christine Sidenius, Greens/EFA Advisor on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, christine.sidenius@europarl.europa.eu ---

Situation in Belarus

Statement by the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
Plenary debate Wednesday 14 March 2012 - vote Thursday 29 March 2012 The Greens are extremely concerned about the worsening situation in Belarus but also believe the EU's response needs to be reoriented: expanding sanctions and reducing economic ties on the one hand, while redoubling diplomatic efforts on the other hand.
The European Parliament adopted the joint motion for resolution on Belarus as well as the 8 amendments tabled jointly by 5 parliamentary groups including the Greens/EFA.

- Greens/EFA motion for resolution
- Text adopted by EP (only available in Word so far)
- Greens/EFA press release on Belarus (23 March 2012)

Further information:
Paolo Bergamaschi, Greens/EFA adviser on Foreign Affairs, paolo.bergamaschi@europarl.europa.eu

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AND ALSO

Document Freedom Day - Open standards in the eBook market

The Greens/EFA conference aimed at giving voice to the movement for a free information infrastructure, and to highlight the importance of Open Standards and how they impact both universal access to the Public Domain and business opportunities in the eBook market.

- See Video documentation of the event

Earth Hour (31 March)

For Earth Hour 2012, the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament is making a commitment to ensure the EU commits to real measures to cut our energy consumption for good, and not just one hour.

- Video The Greens/EFA Challenge for #earthhour2012

Save the fish - Save the fishermen

We must rebuild fish stocks so that we can eat fish in the future, have healthy ocean ecosystems and sustainable jobs for fishermen. Today, three out of four fish stocks in the EU are overfished and 60 percent of the fish we eat comes from imports. The EU is reforming its fisheries policy and there is one thing we have to do: Save the fish!.

- See our new video

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- www.stopclimatechange.net

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up : 21 April 2012

Recommended

Press release

Ivan Aleksic

Serbia/Mladić: Quote from MEP Prebilič

04.09.2026

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Responsible MEPs

Jan Philipp Albrecht

Member

Rebecca Harms

Member

Ulrike Lunacek

EP Vice-President, Member

Keith Taylor

Member

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