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Greens/EFA Round-up

Debriefing of the plenary week Strasbourg 3-6 February 2014



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Fighting Homophobia

*Own-initiative report (Green MEP Ulrike Lunacek)
Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs*

Debate Monday 3 February 2014 – Vote Tuesday 4 February 2014 A massive lobbying campaign by conservative hardliners was mobilised against an anti-homophobia report by Green MEP Ulrike Lunacek this week. The report calls for an EU roadmap against homophobia and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Thankfully, a majority of MEPs Tuesday supported the call. The European Commission must now finally outline a coherent approach at EU level, including concrete follow-up measures, as it has already done for the Roma minority and for people with disabilities. With intolerance on the rise in Europe, this is a powerful signal of support for the LGBTI community.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR/ES\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Ulrike Lunacek \(EN\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Facebook](#)
- [Plenary speech - Ulrike Lunacek - Youtube](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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Smart grids and decentralised renewables

Legislative report (Green MEP Elisabeth Schroedter report)

Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Plenary Debate Monday 3 February – Vote Tuesday 4 February 2014 The major benefits of smart grids at regional and local level were highlighted in a report by Green MEP Elisabeth Schroedter, which was endorsed by an overwhelming majority of MEPs on Tuesday. The report highlights the role of smart grids in terms of allowing a flexible, decentralised and renewables-based energy supply, which is stable, secure and affordable, empowering citizens to become energy producers as well as consumers. It sets out recommendations on what the EU should do to promote the uptake of smarter energy systems at regional level, including through better cooperation, as well as addressing the legitimate concerns of citizens around data protection and data privacy.

- [Press release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Elisabeth Schroedter \(DE/EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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Enforcing EU law

Own-initiative report (Green MEP Eva Lichtenberger)

Committee on Legal Affairs

Plenary debate Monday 3 February 2014 – Vote Tuesday 4 February 2014 The implementation and enforcement of EU legislation remains a major problem, as revealed in the report by Green draftsman Eva Lichtenberger endorsed by MEPs Tuesday. The report highlights some of the problem areas, as well as singling out EU member states that are laggards when it comes to implementing EU laws. It also points to the persisting problems with enforcement by the European Commission, notably its unwillingness to use the infringement procedure to ensure EU law is implemented in an effective and timely manner.

- [Plenary speech – Eva Lichtenberger \(DE/EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information:

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Insider trading

Legislative report (McCarthy report)

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Plenary debate and vote Tuesday 4 February 2014 An agreement completing EU legislation on market abuse and insider trading (in response to the LIBOR scandal), which adds criminal sanctions to the administrative ones already agreed, was endorsed by MEPs Tuesday. The Greens supported the final legislation, in particular provisions to include all derivatives and ensure attempted abuse and recklessness are also sanctioned, as well as index manipulation. It also includes provisions on the training of judges and investigators to better equip them to deal with these complex crimes.

- [Press release \(FR\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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Trade dumping: environmental and social concerns

Legislative report (Fjellner report)

Committee on International Trade

Plenary debate Tuesday 4 February – Vote Wednesday 5 February 2014 Legislative measures aimed at preventing imports from non-EU countries that are subject to unfair trade practices from being 'dumped' into EU markets were voted on Wednesday. Green proposals to ensure the inclusion of social and environmental standards in the mechanism for the application of the lesser-duty rule were supported by MEPs. This will allow for the application of higher duties if the exporting country does not have sufficient commitments under "core" ILO conventions and Multilateral Environmental Agreements. A Green proposal to give trade unions the possibility to file complaints jointly with the industry was also included.

- [Press release \(FR\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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EU climate and energy policy to 2030

Own-initiative report (Delvaux/Szymanski report)

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety & Committee on Industry, Research and Energy

Plenary debate Tuesday 4 February 2014 – Vote Wednesday 5 February 2014 The European Parliament on Wednesday stated clearly that the Commission's unambitious climate goals are unacceptable. The report endorsed by MEPs sends a strong signal to our Heads of State and government that it is time now to boost renewables and energy efficiency and get away from fossil fuels and nuclear. It includes binding 2030 targets for renewables, energy efficiency and greenhouse gases. The Greens welcomed these binding targets, that fly in the face of some of the non-binding Commission proposals, but were disappointed that MEPs did not send a clearer message to investors and industry with more ambitious targets. Although there

is now a good 40% energy efficiency target, we need a 60% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 to send a clear signal and increase the chances of staying below 2 degrees Celsius warming. MEPs backed only a 40% reduction target. Similarly, an ambitious but realistic 45% target for renewables by 2030 is needed but MEPs regrettably called for only a 30% share. More positively, although a call for a moratorium on fracking was defeated by right-wing MEPs, a call for Environmental Impact Assessments for exploration and extraction was supported.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR/ES\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Bas Eickhout \(EN\)](#)
- [Climate blog \(EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information:

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Air passenger rights and compensation

Legislative report (Bach report)

Committee on Transport and Tourism

Plenary debate & Vote Wednesday 5 February 2014 Proposals to update EU rules on air passenger rights, notably regarding compensation for delays, were voted on by MEPs Wednesday. MEPs adopted the position of the a European Court of Justice ruling that passengers should be eligible for compensation following 3 hours of delay, against the 5 hour proposal of the Commission. Although this will undoubtedly strengthen the rights of air passengers, the Greens would have preferred to go further, with partial compensation for delays over 1 hour. The definition of 'extraordinary circumstances' airlines can use to avoid paying compensation was also narrowed. Rights are only as good as their enforcement however and we were happy that a Green proposal to create independent mediation bodies to resolve conflicts between passengers and airlines was also adopted.

- [Press release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Michael Cramer \(DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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Securing basic rights for seasonal workers

Legislative report (Moraes report)

Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Plenary debate and vote Wednesday 5 February 2014 New EU rules on seasonal workers were endorsed by MEPs Wednesday. The legislation sets out the scope and the criteria for entry and stay, refusal, renewal and withdrawal of permits and workers' rights among other things. With unregulated seasonal workers facing major social issues, the Greens supported the final outcome as an important first step towards regular, legal entry for seasonal workers, even if the group had hoped for a more ambitious result. Importantly, it establishes the right of equal treatment, albeit with some exemptions, as well as sanctions against employers.

- [Press release \(EN/FR/DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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Fatal Pushback of Refugees

Plenary debate Wednesday 5 February 2014 The recent high profile case of refugees dying after being intercepted by Greek authorities in the Aegean was debated by MEPs Wednesday. Other allegations of malpractice have added to concerns about the treatment of refugees by the Greek border authorities. The highly controversial policy of 'pushbacks' - by which migrants are turned back at sea - contravenes international law. The European human rights commissioner has already called for investigations into collective expulsions and the mistreatment of migrants by the Greek coast-guard and border forces. These must take place and serious action taken if confirmed. However, responsibility does not only lie with the EU border countries. The Greens/EFA group asks the Council and Commission to examine their role as abettors to the human rights violations occurring at the EU external border.

- [“5 Star” Detention Centre – Green Visit to Almagarida detention centre](#)

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Winding up failing banks

Legislative report (Ferreira report)

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Plenary debate Tuesday 4 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 6 February 2014 MEPs endorsed landmark new EU legislation on bank resolution Thursday. The single resolution authority and fund are crucial measures in the EU's response to the financial crisis. The Greens believe the overall goal should be to limit the exposure of taxpayers and ordinary savers to future bank failures. An intergovernmental treaty for the fund, as discussed in Council, would not be acceptable. Also, the convoluted and unworkable structure proposed was highlighted and ridiculed by Green MEP Sven Giegold last week in his infographic. To effectively function at EU-level, final decision-making power should be given to the Commission, and decisions should be prepared by a truly European body, with full accountability to the European Parliament. Finance ministers must now agree with the Parliament and accept this process.

- [Press release \(EN/DE/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Daniel Cohn-Bendit \(EN/FR\)](#)
- [Infographic by Sven Giegold \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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Ukrainian crisis and the EU's role

Motion for resolution

Plenary debate Wednesday 5 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 6 February 2014 The European Parliament Thursday appealed for a peaceful and political solution in Ukraine and for the EU to do all in its power to ensure this. Greens/EFA Co-President Rebecca Harms has visited Kiev multiple times during the crisis and along with the rest of the Greens is putting pressure on the EU to stop standing by and instead respond with serious sanctions against the regime. The motion passed by MEPs calls for targeted sanctions against

the regime and its financial backers, notably visa restrictions and restrictions on capital flows. MEPs also supported a Green call for a permanent EP observation mission in Ukraine. The recent brutal crackdown by the Ukrainian authorities, which resulted in the tragic loss of life, needs to be clearly condemned by the EU and all imprisoned demonstrators released. Ukraine must be allowed to choose freely its future without undue pressure or retaliation from neighbouring countries.

- [Press release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Rebecca Harms \(DE/EN/FR\)](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for a resolution](#)
- [Call for support for Ukraine \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Greens/EFA event From Maidan Square to the European Parliament](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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EU accession - Progress report on Macedonia

Motion for a resolution

Foreign Affairs Committee

Plenary debate Wednesday 5 February 2014 – Vote Thursday 6 February 2014 The European Parliament adopted Thursday a report outlining its position on the stalled EU accession progress of Macedonia. The Greens welcomed the adoption of the report and, in particular, a Green amendment seeking to clarify the long-running dispute over the country's name. For over a decade, the issue about what to call the country north of Greece, west of Serbia and east of Albania has dragged on. While the country had received a positive recommendation for opening of accession negotiations from the European Commission and European Parliament for years now, it had always been rejected by the Council because of the name issue. Greens hope that the statement of the EP will give new impetus to the negotiations on the name issue, especially since Greece currently holds the Council presidency.

- [Press release \(EN\)](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

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ALSO

- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on Syria](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on Egypt](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on Bahrain](#)
- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on the right of education in Transnistria](#)

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up: 27 February 2014

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Opinion

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