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News | 19.12.2014

Greens/EFA Round up

Debriefing of the Strasbourg plenary week 15-19 December 2014

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Tar sands in the EU

Plenary debate Monday 15th December 2014 - vote Wednesday 16th December 2014 MEPs narrowly failed Wednesday to reject new fuel quality rules proposed by the EU Commission, which do not include a separate methodology for assessing greenhouse gas emissions from tar sands oil. The production of oil from tar sands is not only dirty and damaging to the environment, it also has a far greater impact on climate change than conventional oil. The vote now leaves the door open to tar sands oil entering the fuel mix in Europe. The bigger picture is the future of the fuel quality directive itself. We want it to continue beyond 2020, but the flawed methodology must be rectified.

- **Press release** (EN)

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European Commission work plan

Plenary debate Tuesday 16th December 2014
The vote will be held at the next part-session in January

The European Commission presented its work plans for the coming year to MEPs Tuesday. Attention is rightly focused on what is not there, rather than what is, with plans to scrap crucial draft EU rules.

It is highly frustrating that the Commission has not responded to strong cross-party pressure not to withdraw the crucial proposals on the 'circular economy'. It is wishful thinking that this Commission will withdraw the draft law to replace it with something more ambitious. Similarly, giving air pollution rules a stay of execution will only encourage those who want the proposals scrapped to lobby further.

- **Press release** (EN/FR/DE)
- **Plenary speech – Philippe Lamberts** (EN/DE/FR)

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European economic governance

Plenary debate
Tuesday 16th December 2014 An assessment of the EU's economic governance system presented by the European Commission was debated by MEPs Tuesday. The Greens were disappointed that the Commission considers the current economic governance framework to be successful and that there is no need for a revision. We believe that a revision of the legal framework is not only needed for the budgetary rules but also to provide a basis for investment. It is short-sighted to claim there is no need to review the macroeconomic imbalances procedure. The current procedure puts most of the burden on deficit countries instead of providing a more symmetrical approach, which is necessary for any sustainable monetary union.

- **Press release** (ES)

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EU budget shortfalls

Plenary debate Tuesday 16th December 2014 – vote Wednesday 17th December 2014 An agreement on the EU's budget for 2015, as well as top-up payments for the 2014 budgetary period, was voted on by MEPs Wednesday. We criticised the deal, which is bad for the credibility of the EU. Yet again, the EU is being committed to a budget deficit, with spending commitments that will not be met by the actual payments signed up to. There will again be chaos next year, with EU projects such as Erasmus facing shortfalls. Short-sighted EU governments are clearly to blame but the bigger political groups in the European Parliament are also culpable for caving in to pressure.

- **Press release** (EN/DE)
- Download infograph
- Text adopted

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EU summit, LuxLeaks and investment

Plenary debate Wednesday 17th December 2014 – EU summit Thursday 18th to Friday 19th December 2014
MEPs debated Wednesday the forthcoming EU summit, with investment and LuxLeaks to the fore. It is welcome that Commission president Juncker is looking to counterbalance the effects of the financial crisis and the austerity-focused response by proposing an investment plan. However, as well as it lacking ambition, the mega-wish-list of projects proposed by EU member states to secure funding does not provide a basis for a sustainable economic recovery. This is not a viable way to fight unemployment. Also, the second round of Luxembourg Leaks revelations shows we are far from getting to the bottom of the mass tax avoidance scandal. We believe this must be a priority item of the EU summit.

- **Press release 17.12** (EN/DE/FR)
- **Plenary speech – Rebecca Harms** (DE/EN/FR)
- Press release 19.12 (EN/DE/FR)
- Green investment plan for Europe + comparison
- **Act of Go website** (EN/DE/FR/ES/NL)
- **Greens/EFA action plan on tax avoidance and tax dumping** (EN/DE/FR/ES/NL)

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Recognition of Palestine

Plenary vote – Wednesday 17th December 2014 The European Parliament today adopted a resolution with a large majority calling for the Palestinian state to finally be recognised. We Greens have long supported a two state solution and view the recognition of Palestine as an important step towards a peaceful solution of the Middle East conflict, which puts pressure on both sides to this end. We also welcome that MEPs supported a Green proposal to set up a 'parliamentarians for peace' initiative with deputies from Europe, Israel and Palestine.

- **Press release** (EN/DE/FR)
- Facebook Sharepic
- **Greens/EFA motion for resolution** which fed into the final European Parliament resolution
- Text adopted

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CIA abuses and the complicity of EU member states

Plenary debate - Wednesday 17th December 2014
The vote will be held in February The landmark report presented in the US Congress on CIA abuses has again shone the spotlight on the complicity of European governments in this shameful episode, with a former European head of state admitting his country had facilitated extraordinary renditions. Despite the masses of evidence to emerge on the complicity of EU member states, including the ground-breaking European Parliament inquiry, proper accountability remains elusive. EU governments must stop burying their heads in the sand and face up to their actions.

- **Press release** (DE)

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EU GMO authorisations

Committee vote - Wednesday 17th December 2014 An agreement on a proposed new scheme for the authorisation of genetically-modified organisms in the EU was voted on by the European Parliament's environment committee Wednesday. This new scheme risks being a slippery slope for easing EU GMO authorisations, without providing certainty for those wanting to opt-out or say 'no' to GMOs. It fails to provide a legally watertight basis for those countries wishing to opt out and, as such, this 'renationalisation' of decisions on GMO cultivation is a Trojan horse. We now look to Jean-Claude Juncker to deliver on his promise to ensure the EU authorisation process is also reformed to reflect the consistent democratic opposition to GMOs in Europe.

- **Press release** (EN)

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Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up: 16 January 2015

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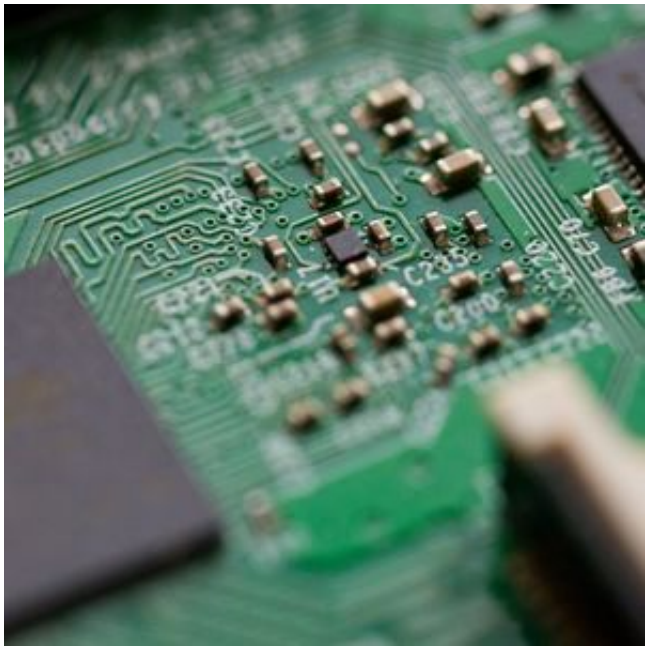


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