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Greens/EFA Round up

Debriefing of the Strasbourg plenary week 6-9 June 2016

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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

Glyphosate: 'technical extension' of the EU approval of the herbicide glyphosate fails

Mon. 6 June – EU government representatives in Council working group

A proposal for a temporary 'technical extension' of the EU approval of the toxic herbicide glyphosate failed Monday to secure the support of a majority of EU governments. This is the third strike against the toxic substance - used for example in Monsanto's Roundup – and this must mean its approval is ruled out for good. The Greens applaud EU governments who refused to authorise this controversial toxic herbicide. There are clear concerns about the health risks with glyphosate, both as regards it being a carcinogen and an endocrine disruptor. Time's up for glyphosate and other toxic herbicides and pesticides in agriculture. It's now time for a new sustainable agricultural model using environment-friendly methods, economically sustainable and sufficiently productive to provide enough food for all.

- [Press release \(DE/EN/FR\)](#)
- [Seven reasons to ban glyphosate](#)

Further information

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Food security and a fair food supply chain

Mon. 6 June – EP debate; votes Tues.

The parliament gave overwhelming support to a critical report on the 'New Alliance for Food Security and Nutrition' from Green MEP Maria Heubuch. This public-private partnership - ostensibly aimed at promoting investment in agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa is counter-productive, undermining local communities and the environment. The report includes strong criticism of large scale public private partnerships, important provisions against land grabbing, and a specific call on the G8 not to support GMO crops in Africa.

Our MEPs also backed a report, again adopted with a large majority, highlighting the difficulties faced by SMEs, producers and farmers in the food supply chain - including those in the developing world such as Fairtrade producers - as a result of unfair trading practices. The report also sets out proposals on how to improve the situation.

- [Web article on New Alliance](#)
- [Text adopted](#)
- [Web article on Unfair Trading Practices](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information
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Watering down EU rules on financial speculation

Tues. 7 June – EP debate and vote

An agreement revising the recently-agreed EU rules on 'financial instruments' (MiFID) was adopted Tuesday by MEPs. While the original review was only supposed to delay implementation of the rules by a year (itself an invitation for more lobbying), the financial sector lobby has succeeded in convincing MEPs to hijack the 'fast track' process to change the rules themselves. As a result, new loopholes have been introduced without much discussion, exempting certain activities and products. The door is now open for special interests to achieve opportunistic modifications. The review will massively delay the agreed implementation of these crucial rules. This is essentially a good example of “worse regulation” – chipping away at the legislative response to the crisis that has cost ordinary citizens so much but seems to have been conveniently forgotten by most lawmakers.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Plenary speech – Philippe Lamberts](#)

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Limited legal EU migration tainted by outsourcing to 3rd countries

Tues. 7 June – European Commission proposal

The EU Commission presented Tuesday a new "Partnership Framework" for the EU's cooperation with

third-countries, as well as its long-awaited proposals on legal migration: namely, a legal entry visa programme for high-skilled migrants, the so-called 'blue card'.

For the Greens, the Commission's proposal is an abdication of responsibility by the EU. The massively flawed agreement with Turkey would essentially become a template for the EU's approach to asylum and migration. Finally, there are major concerns about the outsourcing of migration to countries that do not respect fundamental rights.

The Greens have long argued for the need to create a system of legal migration to the EU. However, this must be based on fair criteria and not limited to migrants in high wage sectors. It also cannot divert attention from the need to find a solution to refugee crisis. A large part of those risking their lives to come to Europe by sea are economic migrants. The EU should establish legal routes for low and middle skilled migrants.

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

Further information

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Tobacco, health and the role of industry: international rules

Tues. 7 June – EP debate and vote

Parliament voted to ratify the WHO protocol on the illicit trade in tobacco products. The Greens strongly supported the ratification of the protocol, which is the appropriate instrument for dealing with the problem. This step is also crucial in the context of the debate on the renewal of the controversial PMI agreement between tobacco companies and the EU, which is set to expire this year. With the main objectives of the agreement now covered by EU law and the WHO protocol, there is no case to renew a special agreement with the tobacco industry.

- [Press release on the PMI agreement](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information

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Panama Papers: EP inquiry into tax evasion, tax avoidance and money laundering in the EU

Weds. 8 June – EP vote

MEPs voted to formally approve the creation of a parliamentary inquiry committee into the 'Panama Papers' revelations, which showed that wealthy individuals and firms channel funds through offshore firms to avoid paying taxes. The Greens/EFA group led the push for the creation of an EP inquiry to properly investigate the revelations and their implications at EU level. A mandate for the inquiry along the lines proposed by the Greens has been approved by the Conference of Presidents of EP political groups. The Greens/EFA representatives on the committee will be Sven Giegold, Molly Scott Cato, Eva Joly, Pascal Durand. Substitute members for will be: Heidi Hautala, Michel Reimon, Ernest Maragall and Ernest Urtasun.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Social media](#)

Further information

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Commission given strong rebuke over failure to act on endocrine disruptors

Weds. 8 June – EP debate and vote

The Parliament adopted a resolution condemning the European Commission for failing to propose hazard-based scientific criteria to address the problem of chemical substances that interfere with the endocrine system. Two and half years have passed since the original deadline and half a year since the General Court of the European Union ruled that the Commission is breaching EU law by failing to adopt the criteria. The continuous delay even after the judgment means that the Commission is now also violating the Treaties - this is totally unacceptable. Defining clear criteria on what constitutes an endocrine disruptor is a crucial step for properly regulating these chemicals and, ultimately, phasing them out.

- [Press Release](#)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information

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Further information

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Parliament again says no to GMOs

Weds. 8 June – EP votes

MEPs voted to object to the authorisation for import of two GM products - a carnation and a maize. These were the 5th and 6th objections (all initiated by the Greens/EFA) that have been submitted to the plenary since December of last year. The non-binding objections highlight the concerns with these varieties but also underline the urgent need to revise the EU system for authorising genetically-modified food. While these objections are not binding on the Commission, we hope that Mr Juncker will finally propose a new decision-making process, as promised to the European Parliament in 2014. MEPs also voted for the first time on the issue of so-called "new breeding techniques," rejecting calls for these new GMOs to be deregulated.

- [Web article](#)
- [Social media](#)

Texts adopted:

- [Maize](#)
- [Carnation](#)

Further information

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MEPs demand regulation on open, efficient and independent EU administration

Thur. 9 June – EP vote

Over three years ago, the European Parliament called on the Commission to present legislation that would improve the openness, efficiency and independence of the EU administration. Since the Commission has so far failed to act on this demand, Members of the European Parliament's legal affairs committee, led by Greens/EFA MEP Heidi Hautala, have taken it into their own hands to draft a regulation. These proposals were given the endorsement of the parliament through a vote in plenary, sending a strong message to the Commission that this issue isn't going anywhere. The Parliament expects the Commission to consider the proposal and come forward with a legislative proposal in its work programme for the year 2017.

- [Web article](#)

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Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- [Cambodia](#)
- [Endocrine disruptors \(joint motion\)](#)
- [Tajikistan](#)
- [Venezuela](#)
- [Vietnam](#)

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