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Greens/EFA Round up

Debriefing of the Strasbourg plenary week 3-6 July 2017

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Longer lifetimes for products would benefit consumers and business

Debate Monday, vote Tuesday

The European Parliament adopted Tuesday a report from Greens/EFA MEP Pascal Durand on “planned obsolescence” and related issues. The text aims at extending the life of products to the benefit of consumers and businesses, their employees and the environment. It looks at product design, repairability, the employment potential, consumer information, legal guarantees and software obsolescence. For the Greens, environmental, social and economic consequences of such a throwaway society cannot be ignored anymore. Whether it is resource depletion, transport emissions, waste, or the impact on household budgets, the current situation is clearly not sustainable. This report sends a strong message to the Commission that the Parliament expects to see it support the development of more sustainable economic model.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release \(DE/EN/ES/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Pascal Durand](#)

Further information

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Country by country reporting will help deliver tax justice

Debate and vote Tuesday

The European Parliament adopted Tuesday its proposal for greater tax transparency, so-called country-by-country reporting of financial information. This is a big victory and a major tool in the fight for tax justice, which the Greens have been consistently supporting for years. The new tool will make it much harder for big businesses to hide if they stash money in tax havens. However, we remain concerned with a so-called 'safeguard clause', which could create loopholes and allow companies to continue not to publish their data. If companies argue that some information is commercially sensitive, they could apply each year for an exemption from disclosure. It is a shame that some liberal and conservative MEPs backed such amendments, choosing to help big corporations over European citizens.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release \(DE/EN/ES/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Ernest Urtasun](#)

Further information

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Endocrine Disrupters: definition still not fit for purpose

The European Commission's Standing Committee on Plants, Animals, Food and Feed approved Tuesday new criteria determining hormone-disrupting chemicals used in pesticides. These criteria will unfortunately make it very difficult to identify endocrine disrupters, meaning that few if any products would be removed from the market. The Greens strongly regret that, like the European Commission, most Member States have put the interests of a handful of big agro-chemical companies ahead of the safety of the public, with negative effects that go well beyond pesticides. We will now work to build the majority needed in the European Parliament to veto these criteria and instruct the Commission to finally deliver what was demanded of it years ago: proper or useable criteria to determine what is an endocrine disrupter.

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

Further information

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“PIF” directive will help Union in the fight against fraud

Debate Tuesday, vote Wednesday

MEPs approved Wednesday the directive on the protection of the financial interests of the EU (or "PIF Directive"). Alongside the establishment of the European Public Prosecutor's Office (EPPO), this is an important step forward in the fight against fraud. This will reform the collection of VAT for cross-border businesses and will make consistent EU-wide rules on VAT fraud. The Greens fought hard to make sure that VAT and public procurement fraud remain in the scope of the directive and that imprisonment thresholds will be harmonized. It is completely unacceptable that tax revenues, which could be invested in public services, are instead being lost to cross-border economic crime. The European Commission estimates that Member States lose at least 50 billion euros per year to VAT fraud.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release \(DE/EN/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Benedek Jávor](#)

Further information

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New parliamentary committee on terrorism

Conference of Presidents Wednesday, vote Thursday

The European Parliament approved Thursday the setting up of a special committee to look at the EU's response to terrorism. In the negotiations, the Greens/EFA group ensured that the committee will carefully assess the effects of security measures on fundamental rights. We need to make sure anti-terror measures don't undermine fundamental rights

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

Further information

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Turkey: EU progress incompatible with proposed constitutional reforms

Debate Wednesday, vote Thursday

The European Parliament has strongly criticised the Turkey government through a report adopted Thursday in plenary. As well as outlining the systematic violation of human rights and the persecution of opposition, the report calls for the suspension of EU accession talks should the proposed constitutional

reforms supported in the recent referendum be implemented unchanged. This is the first time that a progress report has called for the suspension of negotiations with any country. The formulation de facto postpones the suspension until 2019 and lands the final responsibility on the shoulders of the Turkish government. As such it comes close to the Greens/EFA position that has been to freeze negotiations, rather than suspend them. We want to see Turkey return to democracy and a shared future with the EU. However, it is clear that accession negotiations cannot progress as long as Erdogan continues down such an anti-democratic path. The EU also needs to drastically reconsider its relationship with Turkey on terrorism and migration. Green/EFA MEPs have also made clear that there should not be any negotiations with Turkey on the modernisation of the Customs Union as long as President Erdogan continues the brutal mass persecution of hundreds of thousands of people, including opposition members and independent journalists under the guise of alleged links to the Gülen movement. President Erdogan cannot expect the EU to hold the door open while he tramples on European values.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release \(DE/EN/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Bodil Valero](#)
- [Social media](#)

Further information

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Marrakesh Treaty - copyright exceptions on books for the blind or visually impaired

Press conference, Wednesday, vote and debate Thursday

MEPs have adopted Thursday the final deal on the implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty in the EU, by Greens/EFA rapporteur Max Andersson. The EU Directive and Regulation implementing the treaty introduces new exceptions to some copyright rules for books and other materials in accessible formats for the benefit of people who are blind or visually impaired (such as audiobooks, large print, and braille), but also facilitate the cross-border exchange of these accessible formats within and outside of the EU. The Greens are delighted that such a strong majority approved the trilogue agreement, and now call on the Member States to swiftly ratify the Marrakesh Treaty. While the treaty's ratification process has been blocked in the Council since 2014, the opinion of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in February 2017 confirmed the exclusive competence of the EU. The vote of the Parliament should renew the political impetus to accelerate the ratification process. A Council decision on the ratification of the Treaty by the Union should be presented under the Estonian Presidency in the autumn.

- [Text adopted - Permitted uses of certain works \(...\)](#)
- [Text adopted - Cross-border exchange \(...\)](#)
- [Press release \(DE/EN/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary speech – Max Andersson](#)
- [Social media](#)

Further information

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Refugees and migration

European Interior Ministers meeting, Thursday

European Interior Ministers met Thursday to discuss an action plan that they claim will support Italy on migration. The plan would further outsource the EU's response to the crisis in the Mediterranean to Libya and impose a code of conduct on NGOs helping migrants at sea. French, Italian and German members of the Greens/EFA group criticised this harmful initiative, saying Member States must offer real solutions instead of attacking NGOs.

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

Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- [Situation in Burundi](#)
 - [China: cases of Nobel laureate Liu Xiaobo and Lee Ming-Che](#)
 - [European Parliament's priorities for the Commission Work Programme 2018](#)
 - [Eritrea, notably the cases of Abune Antonios and Dawit Isaak](#)
 - [Building an ambitious EU industrial strategy as a strategic priority for growth, employment and innovation in Europe](#)
-

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Jan van der Wolf



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