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News | 18.07.2014

Greens/EFA Roundup

Debriefing of the Strasbourg plenary week 14-17 July 2014

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TTIP EU-US negotiations continue while concerns grow

Plenary debate Tuesday 15th July 2014 MEPs debated the controversial EU-US TTIP trade talks on Tuesday. Coinciding with the sixth negotiating round this week, a new European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) on TTIP was successfully registered with the European Commission. The Greens fully support it and will proactively work to ensure a successful outcome. The Greens have consistently raised concerns with the content and possible implications of TTIP on European standards, as well as criticism about the lack of transparency in the negotiations.

- [TTIP Campaign site](#)
- [Blog post](#)
- [Press release \(EN, FR, DE\)](#)
- [Plenary speech by Yannick Jadot](#)
- [TTIP campaign twitter feed](#)

Jean-Claude Juncker elected President of the European Commission

Plenary vote Tuesday 15th July 2014 MEPs elected Jean-Claude Juncker as President of the European Commission on Tuesday. The Greens congratulate Jean-Claude Juncker on his election as President of the European Commission. With his clear pro-European profile, we hope he will take up the challenge of

creating a more fair, sustainable and democratic European Union. While the Greens/EFA group supported the institutional process that led to his election as a major step forward for European democracy and the role of the European Parliament (i.e. that the President come from the political family that came out ahead in the last European elections), a majority in our group was not convinced by Mr Juncker's political priorities and the willingness of the 'big coalition' to make the changes that Europe needs. There were particular concerns regarding his vision on climate and energy policy, the TTIP EU-US trade negotiations, migration and taxation policy. However, our group welcomed the important steps he is prepared to take on reforming the EU's role with regard to GMOs, shale gas and fracking, and lobbying transparency. The Greens will remain open to working with President Juncker on any initiative he and his Commission proposes to create a more fair, sustainable and democratic EU.

- [Press release \(EN/FR/DE\)](#)
- Philippe Lamberts Plenary speech ([French](#) / [English](#) / [German](#))
- [Opinion article from the Greens/EFA group](#)

EU Summit - Ukraine crisis and Europe's role

Plenary debate Tuesday 15th July 2014 - vote Wednesday 16th July 2014 MEPs discussed Tuesday the situation in Ukraine and the EU's role, ahead of the European Council of heads of state and government. Commenting on the outcome of the summit, the Greens reiterated the EU needs to take a more cohesive and stronger stance towards Russia. While it is right to impose sanctions on companies which contribute to the instability in Eastern Ukraine, it is not enough, as Russia continues to ignore them. In its resolution adopted Thursday, the European Parliament has asked for an embargo on arms sales to Russia, a move the Greens support. This includes an immediate suspension of the sale of two French Mistral warships to Russia. EU governments must now end their double-speak and stop supplying military equipment to Russia. The Group has long criticised individual countries, like France and Germany who continue to supply military equipment to Russia as the crisis continues. Also, the Greens believe the South Stream project must be stopped in order to decrease the EU dependence on Russia's hydrocarbons.

- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution](#)
- [Press release \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Plenary intervention - Rebecca Harms \(DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted by EP](#)

EU maternity leave rules: no backtracking

*Council and Commission statements
Tuesday 16 July 2014*



The Greens were horrified to learn that the European Commission wants to withdraw proposals to revise EU rules on maternity leave and hit out at this decision. The group had already urged Commission presidency candidate Juncker to reverse this decision. This much-needed review was aimed to bring EU rules on maternity leave in line with the recommendations of the World Health Organisation. For the Greens, this implies increasing the current minimum guaranteed maternity leave from 14 to 22 weeks and providing for the mandatory right to paternity leave. The European Parliament has adopted its first reading position in October 2010. It is up to the Council to signal its willingness to negotiate with the new Parliament. In case the Commission withdraws the file, the whole process will be over. The Greens held an action in the Parliament to keep the pressure on the Commission.

- Plenary speeches by [Monika Vana](#) (DE) and [Ernest Urtasun](#) (ES)

Photos from the action

- [Facebook](#)
- [Flickr](#)

Save the Maternity Directive: let parents choose

- [Watch the video of the action on YouTube](#)
- [Watch the video of the action on Facebook](#)

Tackling youth unemployment in Europe

Plenary debate and vote Wednesday 16th July 2014 The Greens welcome the resolution to tackle youth unemployment adopted Thursday by European Parliament. It is a clear signal that fighting youth unemployment in Europe must be at the core of European policy. The Green-led text proposes concrete solutions to stop ignoring the 8.3 million under 25 jobless young people and the 30 per cent of 15-27-year-olds at risk of poverty and social exclusion. A more effective monitoring of the European Youth Guarantee is needed to ensure member states are taking it seriously and the establishment of the Youth Employment Initiative needs to be accelerated.

- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution](#)
- [Press release \(DE/FR\)](#)
- [Plenary intervention - Karima Delli \(FR\)](#)
- [Plenary intervention - Terry Reintke \(DE\)](#)
- [Text adopted by EP](#)

EU top jobs

European Council Wednesday 16th July 2014

European Parliament vote on interim Commissioners EU heads of state and government failed to decide on their candidates for the remaining 'top posts' in the EU institutions at a special summit Wednesday. EU governments must end squabbling over national and party interests and nominate an EU foreign policy high representative that has experience on the international stage and is immediately recognised as a strong European voice, but is also respected by the 28 national EU foreign ministers. We believe it is important for these posts to be filled by the highest-qualified pro-European candidates. Given the two posts to be nominated so far have been allocated to males, it will also be important to ensure gender balance in the decisions on the remaining posts. In the meantime, during a vote on interim Commissioners in Strasbourg, the Greens also hit out at method and logic for appointing commissioners for months. The logic of appointing replacement commissioners for a term of a few months makes no sense. On top of this, the method chosen by the 'big coalition' in the European Parliament to vote on the 4 interim commissioners 'en bloc' prevents proper democratic scrutiny and decision-making on these candidates. For these reasons, despite the fact our group was favourably disposed to 3 of the 4 candidates, it was impossible for us to vote in favour of this package.

- [Press release on Russia \(EN/DE\)](#)
- [Press release on interim Commissioners \(EN/FR/DE\)](#)

ALSO Greens/EFA motions for resolution on

- [Freedom of expression and assembly in Egypt](#)
- [Sudan, the case of Meriam Yahia Ibrahim](#)
- [Nigeria, recent attacks by Boko Haram](#)
- [Situation in Iraq](#)
- [Crimes of aggression](#)
- [Escalation of violence between Israel and Palestine](#)

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