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News | 18.09.2020

## **Greens/EFA take on the plenary session**

### **14-18 September**

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### **Just Transition Fund**

*Vote: Tuesday 15 September*

*Greens/EFA MEPs: Niklas Nienass (REGI), Mounir Satouri (EMPL), Henrike Hahn (ECON)*

The European Parliament adopted Thursday a report on the Just Transition Fund, one of the core tenets of the Green Deal, essential to support people most affected by the transition towards a climate-neutral economy and the phasing out of coal.

Due to intense lobbying from the gas industry, the report negotiated at Committee level included the subsidising of gas projects, and also the Plenary confirmed the support from the Just Transition Fund for gas infrastructure. The Greens/EFA group therefore voted against.

We support the need to help regions and communities in transitioning away from carbon intensive

industries; however, the group cannot support initiatives that continue to fund fossil fuels. In the midst of a climate emergency and the COVID-19 recovery, the EU must be looking to renewable and clean alternatives to coal, oil and gas.

- [Text adopted](#)

Further information

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## Arms exports

*Debate Monday 14 September, vote Tuesday*

*Rapporteur: Hannah Neumann*

By adopting Hannah Neumann's report Thursday, the European Parliament has called for stricter controls and transparency on EU's exports. The text calls for better end-use control of exported arms, more coordination of national decisions on arms exports, a publicly accessible database on national arms exports and, for arms subsidised through the European Defence Fund, a sanctions mechanism for breaches of the eight EU export criteria.

The Greens/EFA group have long called for an end to irresponsible arms sales by European governments to repressive and aggressive regimes, autocrats, and fragile countries where there is a clear risk that military technology could be used in human rights violations, war crimes or crimes against humanity.

**Hannah Neumann MEP**, rapporteur and Green/EFA group member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, comments:

"Arms are not a normal export commodity and arms exports need strict rules, transparency and control. The billions from the European Defence Fund must not lead to even more irresponsible exports of arms, which in the worst case scenario could end up with warlords and fuel conflicts in crisis regions such as the Middle East."

The report confirms a call for an EU-wide arms embargo against Saudi-Arabia and its allies in the Yemen war. It also aims to trigger a process leading towards the establishment of enforceable EU law in the field of arms exports which is the key Green demand in this context.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release](#)
- [Video – Hannah Neumann](#)
- [Video - Salima Yenbou](#)
- [Video – Arms Exports](#)

Further information

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## State of the Union

*Debate Wednesday 16 September*

The European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen addressed MEPs Wednesday during her 'State of the European Union' speech. The Greens/EFA group are calling for support for refugees, climate protection and a permanent binding mechanism to uphold the rule of law in Europe.

**Ska Keller MEP**, President of the Greens/EFA Group in the European Parliament, commented:

"The current state of this Union is defined by our own failures; by the fact that EU governments let children sleep on the streets, refuse to give water to people in need; send police against people fleeing from violence; knowingly let people drown at sea. We urge the Commission President, to take up the fight with the Member States, to make help for those in need a top priority, to not give in to this disastrous state we're in. Let's demonstrate that we can be courageous and whole-heartedly European.

**Philippe Lamberts MEP**, President of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, said:

"With the Green Deal, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has taken a bold step forward and planted the seeds of a profound reorientation of EU policies. Facing up pressures against this, she made the Green Deal the core of the EU's recovery plan. Now, as she herself says, is the time to put those words into action. The Green Deal must be translated into bold and binding climate, biodiversity and resource conservation targets. And the blind spots of the Green Deal - agricultural and trade policies - must be realigned with it. Likewise, the European Commission must use all levers at its disposal to force big businesses to pay what they owe our societies. Whenever the Commission musters the courage to act boldly, we commit to be generous in our support."

- [Press release](#)
- [Video – Ska Keller](#)
- [Video – Bas Eickhout](#)

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## Global data collection system for ship fuel oil consumption data

*Debate Monday 14 September, vote Tuesday 15 September*

*Rapporteur: Jutta Paulus*

The European Parliament voted in favour Tuesday of a report, led by Greens/EFA MEP Jutta Paulus, calling on shipping to be included in the European emissions trading scheme (ETS) from 1 January 2022 and making shipping companies reduce their CO2 emissions by at least 40% by 2030.

Until now, maritime transport has been excluded from the ETS. In addition, the position of rapporteur

Jutta Paulus (Greens/EFA), adopted by a large majority of MEPs in the Environment Committee, on amending the regulation on monitoring, reporting and verification of carbon dioxide emissions from shipping ('Review of the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) Regulation for shipping emissions') calls on the European Commission to set up a fund for the development of climate-neutral ships and the financing of marine protected areas.

**Jutta Paulus MEP**, rapporteur and Greens/EFA Member of the European Parliament's Environment Committee, commented:

"Today's vote is a great success for climate protection. The European Parliament is taking a big step towards climate protection in shipping. The target of 40 percent less CO2 by 2030 means one and a half percent less emissions in the overall EU balance for the same volume of freight."

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Video – Jutta Paulus](#)
- [Social media](#)
- [Social media](#)

Further information

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## **Situation in the Moria refugee camp**

Debate Thursday 17 September

Following the deadly fire this week that destroyed the Moria refugee camp on Lesbos, Greece, MEPs debated the grave situation that the camps inhabitants face and the EU's response to the disaster. More than 12.000 people are stranded without shelter following the fire. MEPs are calling on the Commission and Council to provide immediate humanitarian and medical assistance, to evacuate the people as swiftly as possible and to provide a sustainable solution for the people of Moria by relocating them to other Member States.

- [Video – Erik Marquardt in Moria](#)
  - [Video – Terry Reintke playing an audio recording of Sabi, an Afghan refugee in Moria \(1/2\)](#)
  - [Video – Terry Reintke playing an audio recording of Sabi, an Afghan refugee in Moria \(2/2\)](#)
  - [Video – Tineke Strik](#)
  - [Video – Damien Carême](#)
  - [Video - Damian Boeselager](#)
  - [Video - Diana Riba i Giner](#)
  - [Video – Margrete Auken](#)
  - [Press release](#)
-

## **Joint debate: the situation in Poland and LGBTI rights**

*Debate Monday 14 September*

*Greens/EFA MEPs: Terry Reintke*

MEPs adopted Thursday a report on breaches to the rule of law and fundamental rights in Poland.

In the time since the Article 7 procedure was initiated against the Polish government, the Law and Justice party has continued to undermine the independence of the judiciary. There must be no place in Europe for discrimination and hatred. 'LGBTI-free zones' in Poland fly in the face of human rights and European values.

**Terry Reintke MEP**, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur on the situation in Poland and Co-President of the LGBTI Intergroup, commented:

"The rule of law in EU countries is not an "à la carte" menu. Member States do not get to choose whether to follow it, this is one of the fundamental principles upon which the Union is founded. We cannot tolerate the continued attacks on the LGBTI community in Poland."

The Greens/EFA Group welcomes that the European Commission triggered Article 7(1) TEU, but condemns the lack of efficient action in the Council - the situation has been deteriorating over almost three years since then. However, the Commission was wrong to omit democracy and fundamental rights from its proposal to trigger Article 7(1).

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Video – Terry Reintke](#)
- [Video - Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield](#)
- [Video - Alice Bah Kuhnke](#)
- [Photo action](#)

Further information

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## **Strategic approach to pharmaceuticals in the environment**

*Debate Monday 14 September*

*Greens/EFA MEPs: Michèle Rivasi*

MEPs adopted Thursday, by a very large majority, a report on shortages of medicines. The Covid-19 health crisis has highlighted the growing problem of shortages of medicines and medical equipment that put people at risk and healthcare systems under pressure.

The Report recommends that the European response to the shortage of medicines must be based on three

pillars: i) a return to health sovereignty by securing supplies; ii) stepping up European action to better coordinate and, iii) supplement Member State health policies, and enhancing cooperation between them and returning EU health sovereignty through closer European integration.

### Transparency

The report calls for the Commission to promote transparency of public spending for research and development of medicines and urges the Commission to revise Directive 89/105/EC\* in the upcoming pharmaceutical strategy.

### Orphan Medicines

The text calls for Regulation (EC) No 141/2000 on orphan medicinal products to be revised in order to reverse the burden of proof for the 10-year market exclusivity clause. This way the holder of the market authorisation has to prove that the product is not sufficiently profitable to cover R&D costs.

The text also calls for including the environmental effects into the risk-benefit assessment for the approval of active substances, for an environmental risk assessment for all human medicines, an update of the requirements for the environmental risk assessment, and that the production of imported medicines should meet the same environmental standards as for medicines produced in the EU.

- [Text adopted](#)

Further information

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\* European Parliament position of 6 February 2013 on the proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council relating to the transparency of measures regulating the prices of medicinal products for human use.

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## **Belarus**

*Debate Tuesday 15, vote Wednesday 16*

*Greens/EFA MEPs: Viola von Cramon*

The European Parliament adopted Thursday, by a large majority, a resolution on the situation in Belarus.

The ongoing crisis in Belarus calls for EU action to support a peaceful transition of power, through a national dialogue involving all relevant Belarusian stakeholders with a view to launch a new and fair electoral process.

The EU should further the cause of democracy and freedom in Belarus, by strengthening assistance to Belarusian civil society and immediately ceasing any financial support to the government and state-controlled projects.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Press release - We call for new and free elections in Belarus](#)
- [Video - Viola von Cramon-Taubadel](#)

- [Webinar – The Last Dictorship in Europe: What next for Belarus](#)

Further information

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## **EU Roma Strategy**

*Votes Tuesday, 15 September and Thursday, 17 September*

*Rapporteur: Romeo Franz*

MEPs adopted Thursday, by a large majority, a report on the Implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies.

Bold action and legally binding measures against racism towards Romani people and for the inclusion of people with Romani background are the main demands of the “Report on the implementation of National Roma Integration Strategies: Combating negative attitudes towards people with a Romani background in Europe.”

The European Parliament sends a strong signal to the Commission that it should propose a legally binding instrument for the Equality, Inclusion, Participation of Romani people and Combating Antigypsyism. The Strategy should combine the socioeconomic aspects with a rights-based approach in the future EU strategy, as well as to use the term ‘Romani people’ in order to better reflect the heterogeneity of Romani community.

This is the first time that the European Parliament clearly requests an EU policy on equality, inclusion and participation of people from Romani backgrounds with binding legal character.

In the context of the COVID-19 epidemic and through multiple cases of police violence against Romani people throughout Europe, there is a clear need for EU and Member State governments to take action and to get representatives of Romani communities involved in the development and implementation of national inclusion strategies, which need to be provided with the necessary financial resources.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Video – Romeo Franz](#)
- [Social media](#)

Further information

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**Maximising the energy efficiency potential of the EU building stock**

*Vote Thursday 17 September*  
*Rapporteur: Ciarán Cuffe*

MEPs adopted Thursday, by a large majority, a report led by Greens/EFA rapporteur Ciarán Cuffe on maximising the energy efficiency potential of the EU building stock. This report, which serves as input to the upcoming Renovation Wave Strategy, sends a strong signal to the European Commission. It aims for more ambitious energy efficiency policies at an EU and national level, notably fight energy poverty, and contribute to climate action while ensuring a sustainable recovery. The text introduces an integrated, neighbourhood approach to building renovation, calls for legislation on housing standards and reminds the Commission that the bulk of necessary renovations has to be carried out in the residential sector.

- [Text adopted](#)
- [Video - Ciarán Cuffe](#)
- [Blog - The EU Commission's Renovation Wave must put people first](#)
- Social media

Further information

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## **Greens/EFA motions for resolutions**

- [Situation in Belarus](#)
  - [The case of Dr. Denis Mukwege in the Democratic Republic of Congo \(DRC\)](#)
  - [COVID-19: EU coordination of health assessments and risk classification, and the consequences for Schengen and the single market](#)
  - [Humanitarian situation in Mozambique](#)
  - [Situation in the Philippines, including the case of Maria Ressa](#)
  - [Situation in Russia: the poisoning of Alexei Navalny](#)
  - [Preparation of the special European Council summit focusing on the dangerous escalation and the role of Turkey in the Eastern Mediterranean](#)
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*Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary debriefing: 9 October 2020*

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