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News | 10.03.2023

Plenary Flash - 13-16 March 2023

Greens/EFA priorities for the plenary session

ENERGY PERFORMANCE OF BUILDINGS DIRECTIVE (EPBD)

On 15 December 2021, the European Commission proposed a recast of the EPBD in the framework of the FIT FOR 55 package. Greens/EFA Group MEP Ciarán Cuffe is the rapporteur for this directive, which aims to lower the energy consumption of buildings through renovations to achieve a fully climate neutral building stock by 2050. The Greens/EFA priorities with the EPBD are protecting those living in energy poverty and helping people to pay their energy bills while bringing down emissions, reducing the EU's dependence on fossil fuels and contributing to the Union's climate goals.

Trilogues will start after the vote and the legislative process should be completed by the end of the Swedish Presidency, after which member states should transpose the directive. On Tuesday 14 March, a press conference on the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive will take place at 14:00 in room N -1/201 in the WEISS building, after the plenary vote.

Debate: Monday 13/3

Vote: Tuesday 14/3

Greens/EFA MEP: Ciaran Cuffe

Press conference: Tuesday 14/3 14:00

LULUCF

On Monday, MEPs will discuss the outcome of the trilogue negotiations on the revision of the regulation for Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF). The Parliament's negotiating team was led by Greens/EFA MEP Ville Niinistö.

The new 2030 targets for the LULUCF sector will oblige Member States to put in place reforms to reverse the current shrinkage of our natural land sinks. These reforms must also decrease the use of intensive agricultural practices which damage biodiversity and jeopardise the capacity of forests and soils to absorb carbon. As lead negotiators on this file, the Greens managed to force Member States to report on how they take into account the principle to “do no significant harm” when adopting policies and measures to meet their LULUCF targets. These reforms are ultimately necessary to achieve a balance between emissions & removals by 2050 at the latest within the Union.

Debate: Monday 13 March

Vote: Tuesday 14 March

Green/EFA MEP: Ville Niinistö

[Read more: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT STRENGTHENS COMMISSION'S PROPOSAL ON LULUCF](#)

ADEQUATE MINIMUM INCOME

On Wednesday, MEPs will vote on a resolution calling on Member States to raise the minimum income for people in need to at least the poverty line. Minimum income schemes are one of the strongest social tools to lift people out of poverty and would ensure that everyone, especially the most vulnerable, can live a decent life. The schemes would guarantee everyone in the EU a living income to pay rent, buy healthy food, continue their education, secure access to health care, and cover energy bills. The Commission has already proposed a recommendation on minimum income schemes, which is non-binding. The Greens/EFA group calls on the Commission to put forward legal measures to make sure that everyone is guaranteed a life in dignity.

Vote: Wednesday, 15 March

Greens/EFA MEP: Sara Matthieu

EU GUIDELINES ON HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

On Tuesday, Members of the European Parliament will debate Women activism – human rights defenders related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. The debate is held in the light of the ongoing trial against Justyna Wydrzynska, a Polish women's rights defender and abortion activist, who is charged with 'helping in the performance of an abortion' and 'possession of unauthorised drugs with the aim of introducing them to the market'. She faces up to three years in prison if she is convicted. The upcoming trial serves as a reminder of the ongoing backlash against women's rights and the importance of the fight to protect our hard won freedoms and bodily autonomy.

In addition, the report on the EU Guidelines on Human rights defenders points out the importance of gender specific implementation of the guidelines. Greens/EFA MEP Hannah Neumann is the rapporteur for this report, which examines the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders and makes recommendations to improve our support for and protection of Human Rights Defenders.

The number of attacks on those fighting around the world for democracy, human rights and the rule of law or climate protection is growing. There is therefore an urgent need to step up our support and improve coordination amongst EU member states.

Debate: Wednesday 15 March
Vote: Thursday 16 March
Greens/EFA MEP: Hannah Neumann
Read more [here](#)

IRAN DEBATE

School girls and university students are still at the forefront of the countrywide protests in Iran. The Iranian government continues to crackdown on them and hundreds of schoolgirls have been poisoned by toxic gas emissions over the past three months.

While it is unclear who is behind the poisonings, they seem to aim to punish schoolgirls for protesting, to spread fear and eventually seek to end education for girls. Although Ayatollah Khamenei has condemned the poisonings, the situation of violence, fanaticism and lawlessness which the Iranian government has created provides fertile ground for such attacks. It is important that the EU continues to shine a light on the protests in Iran, and the Greens/EFA support all EU efforts to put an end to the atrocities women and girls in Iran are facing daily.

Debate: Wednesday, 15 March
Greens/EFA MEP: Ernest Urtasun

DEATHS AT SEA: A COMMON EU RESPONSE TO SAVE LIVES AND ACTION TO ENSURE SAFE AND LEGAL PATHWAYS

Last week a horrific incident occurred off the Calabrian coast when a refugee boat capsized with the entirely preventable loss of over 70 lives. The EU and its Member States have a duty to protect lives and to prevent the loss of life at sea. However, the EU is forcing refugees into dangerous and frequently fatal passages across the sea, instead of proposing safe and legal passage for those seeking safety in Europe.

The current EU approach leaves NGOs to do the work that Member States are legally required to do.

These NGOs are in turn being criminalised by the very same governments who are failing to provide assistance at sea. Pushbacks at European borders continue to happen every day with total impunity, and the EU continues to fund countries' border policies without any scrutiny over the uses of this money. The Greens/EFA Group are calling for state-led, EU-coordinated search and rescue missions with the utmost urgency to prevent further loss of life at sea.

Debate: Wednesday 15 March
Greens/EFA MEPs: Tineke Strik, Erik Marquardt

MORE

- **Assessing the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement, three years after Brexit**
Debate: Tuesday 14 March
Greens/EFA MEPs: Philippe Lamberts, Terry Reintke, Anna Cavazzini
- **Combating discrimination in the EU – the long-awaited horizontal anti-discrimination directive**
Debate: Wednesday 15 March
Greens/EFA MEP: Alice Bah Kuhnke
- **European Citizens' Initiative "Save bees and farmers! Towards a bee-friendly agriculture for a healthy environment"**
Debate: Thursday 16 March
- **Long term commitment to animal welfare**
Debate: Thursday 16 March

LINKS & PRESS CONFERENCES

- The Group co-President **Philippe Lamberts** will hold the plenary session press briefing on Tuesday, 14 February at 10:40. He will be joined by the Greens/EFA group's newest member **Nicolae Ștefănuță** from România.
- Location: Daphne Caruana Galizia Press Room, Weiss N-1/201 or [online via European Parliament website](#). Journalists can ask questions remotely, via [Interactio](#).
- There will be a press conference on the energy performance of buildings with **Ciarán Cuffe** on Tuesday at 14:00. Follow live [here](#) or in the Press Room.
- **Mikuláš Peksa** will hold a cross party press conference on the findings of the trip to Dharmasala to meet with his Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama. On Monday at 17:30 in the Press Room or [online here](#).
- There will be a press conference with **Francois Alfonsi** on assessing the EU's support to regional and minority languages Wednesday at 15:00 in the Press Room.
- The full plenary agenda for the week can be found on the [Parliament website](#).

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