European Union

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Plenary Flash 13-16 September 2021

Greens/EFA priorities

Situation in Afghanistan - *Debate and vote*

With the Taliban now controlling large parts of Afghanistan, millions of people have been displaced and a humanitarian crisis is unfolding quickly, it is urgent that the European Union ensures the protection of people at risk, including women and girls, human rights defenders, LGBTI+ people, religious and ethnic minorities, journalists, writers, academics and artists.

The Greens/EFA Group are calling for a coordinated European approach to evacuate those in need of protection, to issue humanitarian visas and to enhance resettlement as well as the application of the Temporary Protection Mechanism. Across the EU, cities have shown readiness to host people fleeing. Humanitarian aid needs to increase, including for third countries hosting refugees.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Tineke Strik

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

Vote: Thursday, 16 September

More info: Press release on Afghanistan: Greens/EFA call for continuation of evacuations, humanitarian visas and aid

Annual State of the European Union Speech

On Wednesday morning, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen will give her annual State of the Union address to the European Parliament. Philippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA group will speak on behalf of the group.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Philippe Lamberts, President of the Greens/EFA group

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Identifying gender-based violence as a new area of crime listed in Article 83(1) TFEU - *Debate and vote*

Gender-based violence is rooted in gender stereotypes, patriarchal structures and power asymmetries and is one of the greatest violations of human rights in history, which needs to be eradicated as a matter of urgency in order to achieve full gender equality. COVID 19 has exacerbated the situation. Government agencies, women's rights groups and civil society partners in several Member States have indicated an increase in reports of gender-based violence during the pandemic, together with an increased demand for emergency shelters. The United Nations has called this a “shadow pandemic”.

In order to put an end to gender based violence, this report calls for gender-based violence to be added to the list of cross border crimes in the EU. This would provide the EU with the legal basis for a directive that also tackles aspects linked to criminal law.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Diana Riba i Giner (co-rapporteur FEMM), Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield (shadow rapporteur LIBE)

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Vote: Thursday, 16 September

Media freedom and further deterioration of the Rule of law in Poland - *Council and Commission statements*

The plenary will debate the deterioration of the situation in Poland around the rule of law and media freedom. In particular, it will assess recently adopted restrictions on ownership of TV and radio broadcast companies by non-EEA entities which would affect the major independent TV network TVN. It will also reflect on the lack of progress since the adoption of its resolution on Poland in September 2020, including the non-implementation of relevant rulings by the European Court of

Justice and the lack of respect for primacy of EU law. The Commission and the Council will be encouraged to use all tools, including financial ones, to ensure proper respect for the Union values by the Polish authorities.

The Greens/EFA welcome the recent Commission's action regarding disciplinary law for judges, but similar efforts must be taken with other rule of law, fundamental rights and media freedom issues. The Council should prioritise Article 7 hearings and be prepared to address recommendations to Poland.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Terry Reintke and Sylwia Spurek

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Vote: Thursday, 16 September

More info: Press release on Rule of Law: Article 7 discussions shows urgent need for action

Presentation of the Fit for 55 package after the publication of the IPCC report and Natural disasters in Europe - *Commission and council statements and debate*

In the words of the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, the latest IPCC report is "Code Red for humanity". Although the Fit for 55 package is welcome, certain important measures will not be in place until after 2030, such as the phasing out of free allowances in the ETS, the phase-out of combustion engines by 2035 at the earliest, or a full EU minimum tax on kerosene and maritime fuel by 2032. The Green/EFA Group are calling for quicker introduction of proposed measures in addition to further measures which can deliver significant emission reductions at a faster pace.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Ska Keller, Bas Eickhout, Marie Toussaint and Michael Bloss

Debate: Tuesday, 14 September

LGBTIQ Rights in the EU - *Vote*

The Greens/EFA Group is calling for an end to discrimination and to ensure that rights to equal

treatment and non-discrimination are upheld throughout the European Union. The European Commission must enact all necessary measures to guarantee that all Member States recognise the family ties in rainbow families.

After receiving several petitions on the discrimination rainbow families face in the EU when moving across borders and on Poland's violations of the rights of LGBTIQ persons, the Committee on Petitions has drafted a Short Motion for Resolution with a view to ensure a specific follow-up on admissible petitions engaging the whole European Parliament.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Eleonora Evi

Vote: Monday, 13 September

The Pegasus spyware scandal - *Debate*

In July, investigative journalists revealed that a spyware named "Pegasus" has been sold to governments and used against at least 50,000 people in a number of countries around the world, including Hungary. Among the victims were heads of state, trade unionists, human rights defenders, journalists, religious leaders, politicians, business people, and military staff. Pegasus exploits security vulnerabilities in Android and iOS, which allow remote spying over communications.

The Greens/EFA Group are calling for an immediate ban on the trade in spyware, in particular when used in countries with a poor human rights record. We also want the European Parliament to conduct an investigation into the scandal. The perpetrators need to be held accountable for such unlawful activities and we need legal redress for the victims. The scandal also shows that there have to be stricter incentives, including binding rules, for the security of mobile phone operating systems.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Saskia Bricmont

Debate: Wednesday, 15 September

Strengthening transparency and integrity in the EU institutions by setting up an independent EU ethics body - *Vote*

On the initiative of the Greens/EFA Group, the European Parliament will vote on a report on the

creation of an independent Ethics Body to fight conflicts of interest and corruption in the European institutions.

The existing rules to prevent politicians from becoming lobbyists are poorly enforced, and multiple cases of unethical behaviour and 'revolving door' cases have shaken the trust of European citizens in the EU institutions. The Greens/EFA Group believes an independent ethics body can help to address some of the worst practices.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Daniel Freund (rapporteur)

Vote: Thursday, 16 September

Human and animal health: Criteria for the designation of antimicrobials to be reserved for the treatment of certain infections in humans - *Vote on an Objection to a Delegated Act*

On Wednesday evening, the European Parliament will vote on restricting the use of antibiotics for treating farm animals, with questions around how strictly certain antibiotics should be reserved for human use. The Greens/EFA Group has initiated an objection to a delegated act establishing criteria for reserving certain antimicrobials for human use because of the risk that it will not serve the interests of human health nor those of individual animal health. According to the WHO, the most critically important antimicrobials should be reserved for human use, while allowing them to be used as a last resort for the treatment of individual animals, but not for the treatment of whole groups of healthy animals to stop the spread of infections.

Greens/EFA MEPs: Martin Häusling

Vote: Wednesday, 13 September

MORE

- Group Presidents, **Ska Keller** and **Philippe Lamberts** will hold the plenary session press briefing at **11:00 on Tuesday**.
- The full plenary agenda for the week can be found on the Parliament website here.
- The plenary sessions can be followed live here.

GREENS/EFA PRESS CONTACTS

Simon McKeagney (Head of Communication)
Simon.mckeagney@europarl.europa.eu

Alex Johnson (EN)
Alex.Johnson@europarl.europa.eu

Pia Kohorst (DE)
pia.kohorst@europarl.europa.eu

Guendalina De Sario (FR)
guendalina.desario@europarl.europa.eu

Helena Hellström Gefwert (EN)
helena.hellstrom@europarl.europa.eu

Mia Müller (DE)
Mirjam.Muller@europarl.europa.eu

Valentina Chiarini (FR)
valentina.chiarini@europarl.europa.eu

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Press release

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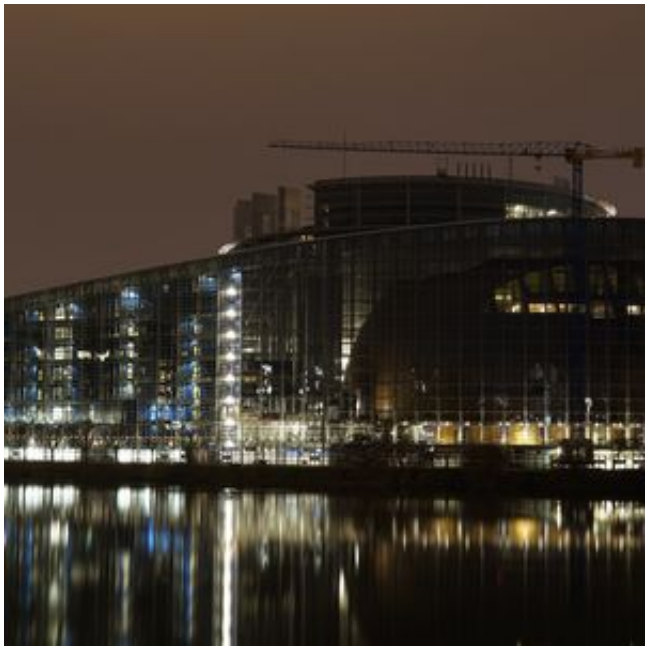


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Contact person



Alex Johnson

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