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News | 29.04.2022

Plenary Flash - 2-5 May 2022

Greens/EFA priorities for the plenary session

The impact of the war against Ukraine on women

On Thursday, MEPs are expected to show strong support for women impacted by the war in Ukraine. Women and girls are particularly at risk as they disproportionately face gender discrimination and gender-based violence. In recent weeks, there have been a growing number of unofficial reports from survivors and intelligence reports about sexual violence. Rape, sexual harassment, and torture are increasingly used by the Russian army as a weapon of war against the civilian population in Ukraine.

As 90% of those fleeing Ukraine are women and children, the Greens/EFA have pushed for a resolution specifically dealing with the impact the war has on women. MEPs will adopt a resolution strongly condemning gender-based violence, including rape, as a weapon of war against Ukraine and urges the EU to combat the growing cases of human trafficking, gender-based violence and other forms of discrimination occurring at the EU borders. The EU must respond to the specific needs of women and girls fleeing Ukraine by ensuring the availability of gender-based violence support services and the access to all sexual and reproductive healths and rights (SRHR), including emergency contraception and abortion care, thereby overriding the national restrictions and barriers existing in the bordering countries of Poland, Hungary and Slovakia. Next week, the Members of the European Parliament will also debate the impact of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine on the EU transport and tourism sectors, as well as the social and economic consequences for the EU of the Russian war in Ukraine - reinforcing the EU's capacity to act.

Debate & vote: Thursday, 5 May

Greens/EFA MEPs: Pierrette Herzberger-Fofana, Alice Bah Kuhnke, Terry Reintke, Viola von Cramon

Use of the Pegasus Software by EU Member States against individuals including MEPs and the violation of fundamental rights

On Wednesday, the Greens/EFA Group will use their topical debate slot to raise the issue of the use of the Pegasus spying software by EU Member States against individuals - including Members of the European Parliament - and the violation of fundamental rights. Despite the Greens/EFA Group proposing a full debate, other groups failed to stand up for fundamental rights and support a debate on Pegasus following

the latest revelations that Greens/EFA Group members Diana Riba i Giner and Jordi Solé were spied on with surveillance spyware technology.

The use of spyware against MEPs is a glaring attack on the notion of parliamentary immunity. An attack on one MEP is an attack on all MEPs and it is unfortunate to see groups support the positions of national governments who have been using Pegasus over their fellow Members. The Greens/EFA will work to ensure that the European Parliament fully investigates this and the many other attacks on fundamental rights and expect full cooperation from EU Member States. Our Group demands an immediate stop to the use of the surveillance spyware.

Debate: Wednesday, 4 May

Greens/EFA MEPs: Diana Riber i Giner (Vice-Chair Pegasus inquiry committee), Saskia Bricmont (coordinator), Jordi Solé, Hannah Neumann, Terry Reintke, Sylwia Spurek, Marcel Kolaja

More: [GREENS/EFA DEMAND IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION AND A HALT TO THE USE OF SURVEILLANCE SPYWARE](#)
[EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VOTES TO SET UP PEGASUS INQUIRY COMMITTEE INTO SURVEILLANCE SPYING & ESPIONAGE SCANDAL](#)

Special Committee on Artificial Intelligence in a Digital Age/AIDA - final report

The Greens/EFA Group welcome that the European Parliament carefully considers the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence in the digital age, but consider it counterproductive to set up a Special Committee and build parallel structures to legislative committees dealing with the AI Act Regulation. Nonetheless, the final report voted in the Special Committee develops important legislative priorities for which the Greens/EFA won a majority: Fundamental rights, environmental effects and the tendency of data markets to lead to monopolies. Our Group countered attempts by the Rapporteur to undermine privacy protection in the General Data Protection Regulation, and to frame AI as an inevitable great power race with the US and China. We managed to anchor a call for legislation on AI in the workplace, climate-neutral digital infrastructure by 2030 and a legislative priority to counteract market concentration in the AI economy.

Key debate: Tuesday, 3 May

Vote: Tuesday, 3 May

Greens/EFA MEPs: Damian Boeselager (Shadow) Kim Van Sparrentak, David Cormand, Alexandra Geese, Sergey Lagodinsky, Marcel Kolaja

Discharge reports 2020

This plenary, MEPs will vote on the 52 separate discharge procedures for the year 2020, which provide an overview of activities and spending for EU institutions and agencies. The reports are a chance for MEPs to hold the institutions and agencies accountable.

This year, the Greens/EFA Group is pushing for the discharge report for the EU's border agency Frontex to be postponed due to cases of mismanagement, unresolved questions related to human rights, and lobbying. In the discharge report of the Parliament, the Greens/EFA Group is continuing the push for greater transparency and accountability for MEPs allowances, and to change the fact that under 2% of total roof surfaces of the EP's buildings in Brussels are equipped with photovoltaic panels.

The European Commission is unable to present the Parliament with a simple list of the final beneficiaries of EU funds, which would allow citizens to follow where taxpayers' money is spent. The Commission has stalled its triggering of the Rule of Law conditionality mechanism in the cases of Hungary and Poland and also failed to tackle the conflict of interest around former Czech PM Andrej Babiš. The Greens/EFA

Group is calling for a postponement of the discharge to the Commission. We are also calling for the postponement of the discharge to the Council, to urge for greater accountability towards citizens and full cooperation cooperating with the Parliament; for the European Court of Auditors due to the lack of transparency and questionable practices related to members' benefits; and for the European Social and Economic Committee due to mismanagement following harassment cases.

Debate: Wednesday, 3 May

Greens/EFA MEPs: Daniel Freund (Parliament), Viola von Cramon (Commission), Mikuláš Peksa (Council), Bas Eickhout (Agencies), Michèle Rivasi (European Development Fund & Joint undertakings).

Electoral law: Election of the Members of the European Parliament by direct universal suffrage

Ahead of next week's vote on the reform of the EU electoral law, the majority of MEPs in the lead Committee on Constitutional Affairs voted in favour of a major breakthrough for European democracy with transnational lists and the lowering of the voting age to 16 years for the next European elections. 28 transnational additional seats for the EU-wide constituency would allow voters to vote for European parties and movements with the same programme and candidates across the EU, in addition to their current vote for national parties.

Unfortunately, the proposed position maintains an electoral threshold for Germany, setting the bars too high for small parties and limiting the equality and representation of voters. The Council will take over the negotiations going forward and will have to approve it unanimously before the start of 2023 in order to leave enough time for ratification by national parliaments. The Greens/EFA Group supports this reform and urges all MEPs and Member States to Europeanise the European elections by taking a first bold step to agreeing to a pan-European vote for Union-wide lists.

Debate: Monday, 2 May

Vote: Tuesday, 3 May

Greens/EFA MEP: Damian Boeselager (Shadow)

Commission statement - Ongoing hearings under Article 7(1) TEU regarding Poland and Hungary

The rule of law crisis inside the EU continues to worsen, but so far Member States in the Council have been reluctant to move forward with the Article 7 proceedings against the governments of Hungary and Poland. This Plenary session, MEPs will debate the situation and call on the Council to take action on violations of the rule of law. The Greens/EFA Group is calling for the French Presidency to prioritise the Article 7 hearings at the next General Affairs Council in May and for the upcoming Czech Presidency to come out with recommendations, including a deadline to act, for the Polish and Hungarian governments. The longer the rule of law crisis is left unaddressed by the Council, the weaker the EU will become.

Debate: Tuesday, 3 May, 13:00

Greens/EFA MEPs: Gwendoline Delbos-Corfield, Terry Reintke

More: [Triggering of Conditionality Mechanism against Hungarian government long overdue](#)

EU Action Plan for Organic Agriculture

After the environmental renunciations of the new CAP and while the war in Ukraine reminds us of the urgency to leave behind an agricultural model that relies on fossil fuels for its fertilisers and pesticides, the European Parliament will adopt its position on the Organic Action Plan.

As the current intensive model has exceeded the limits allowed by the environment, the Greens/EFA Group highlights the urgent need to produce better and not necessarily more to ensure food sovereignty in Europe and the world. Our negotiator Claude Gruffat will defend several amendments to ensure that the final text includes essential objectives of the European Green Deal and the Farm to Fork Strategy. Among these amendments are a target of 25% of EU agricultural surfaces to be organic by 2030, as well as the creation of a network of public actors involved in the introduction of organic products in public canteens.

Debate: Monday, 2 May

Vote: Tuesday, 3 May

Greens/EFA MEP: Claude Gruffat

More: [Press briefing from Claude Gruffat](#)

MORE

Conference on the Future of Europe

Today and tomorrow (29-30 April) will be the last session of the Conference on the Future of Europe. On the 3rd of May the European Parliament will vote on a resolution on the outcomes of the Conference and call for changes to the EU Treaties. On Europe Day, the 9th of May, the Commission will announce the results of the Conference process. A further European Parliament resolution is expected in June and the Council is also expected to decide on the conference outcomes.

Greens/EFA MEP: Daniel Freund

More: [Conference on the Future of Europe](#)

LINKS

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CHANGE OF TIME: Our Group Presidents, Ska Keller and Philippe Lamberts will now hold the plenary session press briefing at 09:00 on Tuesday in the Daphne Caruana Galizia press room in Strasbourg and online.

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The full plenary agenda for the week can be found on the Parliament website [here](#).

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The plenary sessions can be followed live [here](#).

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