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Offshore oil and gas rules

MEPs fail to address risks and liability of offshore drilling

The European Parliament's energy committee today voted on new draft legislation on offshore oil and gas exploration. The Greens expressed regret at the outcome of the vote, which fails to ensure the current gaps in EU rules on offshore exploration are addressed. Commenting after the vote, Green MEP **Michèle Rivasi** said:

"This vote would fail to equip the EU to deal with the risks of offshore drilling. MEPs have failed to address the current gaps in EU rules on offshore exploration, notably as regards liability for accidents and independent safety assessments of installations.

"In spite of the glaring need for a clear and comprehensive EU regulation to deal with the cross border nature of offshore exploration risks, MEPs have gone for a minimalist approach with this directive. Business-as-usual may suit the industry but it is clearly not in the interests of European citizens.

"The legislation as voted today would fail to ensure that offshore operators are fully liable and financially responsible for accidents. It also falls short in terms of providing for independent safety assessments, with no clarity on the independence of safety verifications and no provision for third party verification.

"The Greens believe that the European Maritime Safety Agency should be given ex-ante responsibilities over offshore installations. This implies giving EMSA competences to oversee inspections, audit the relevant authorities and review exploration authorisations. Thankfully, MEPs on the energy committee supported some Green amendments to this end, giving EMSA a greater role in the prevention of accidents as well as clear-up, which should be the goal of any legislation. Unfortunately, the committee failed to support provisions on access to justice for citizens.

"The legislation as voted today is not what the EU needs to address the risks of offshore exploration."

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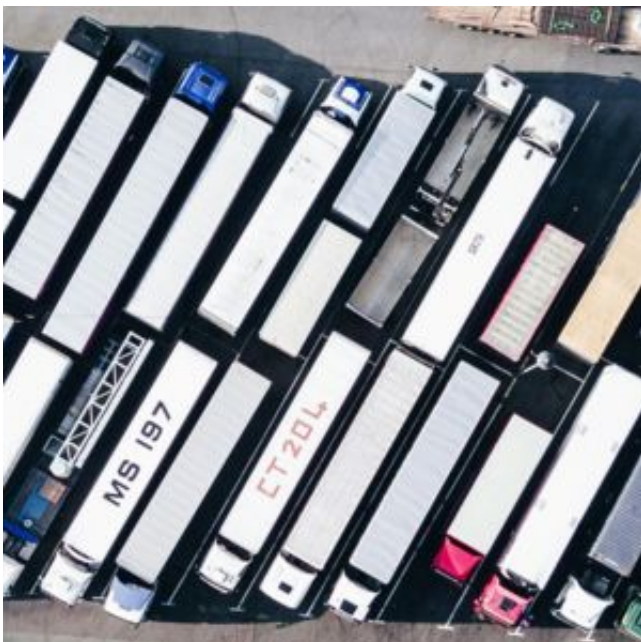


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Responsible MEPs



Michèle Rivasi

Member

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