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Press release | 14.12.2010

Human trafficking

New EU rules an important improvement but Greens regret victim protection provisions not stronger

The European Parliament today voted to adopt a legislative compromise, setting out new EU rules on the prevention of human trafficking and victim rights. The Greens welcomed the compromise but regretted the legislation was not stronger in terms of victim protection. After the vote, Green MEP and civil liberties spokesperson **Judith Sargentini** said:

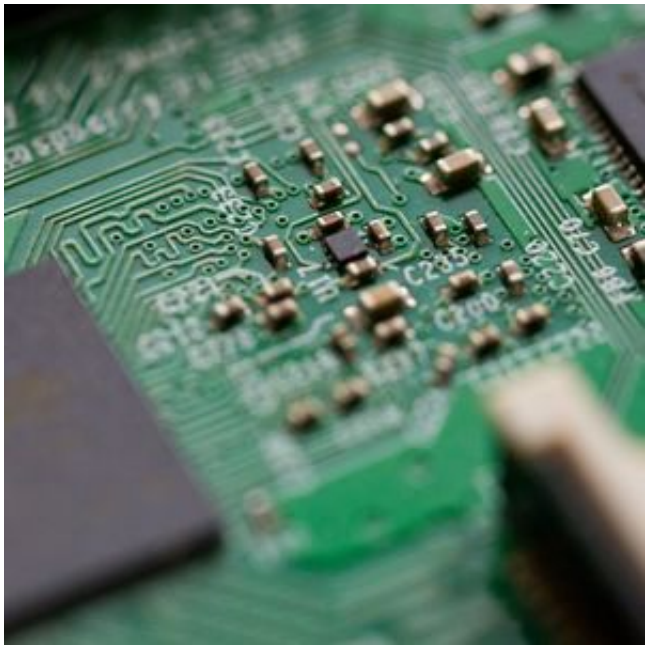
"This legislation represents an important step forward in combating this inhumane and degrading crime and we welcome its adoption today. However, the aim of the directive was to address prevention, prosecution and protection, and the Greens regret that the provisions on victim protection are not as strong as we believe is possible and necessary. The position of victims and their legal status or their rights to legal assistance could and should have been much stronger. Hopefully, the Commission will now come forward with a proposal to revise the directive on residence permits for victims of trafficking so that we will get a truly holistic approach to tackling this hideous crime, as envisaged from the beginning.

"I am also glad that there is no direct reference requiring member states to take legal measures to penalise those who use services (for example dining in a restaurant in which victims of trafficking are working). Besides the intricacy and legal uncertainty of differentiating the 'what, who and when' in all of this, such measures actually risk bringing victims of trafficking further outside the reach of the authorities."

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Judith Sargentini

Member

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