



The Greens | European Free Alliance
in the European Parliament

Brussels Agenda

Weekly preview of the Greens/EFA group - 23-27 April 2012

EP priorities (full text below):

- **Equal pay for equal work (women's rights committee vote, Tues.)**
- **Mobile phone roaming - a small step forward (industry committee vote, Tues.)**
- **Reform of staff regulations for EU officials (legal affairs committee vote, Weds.)**
- **Taxing financial transactions in the EU (economic and financial affairs committee vote, Weds.)**
- **Resource efficiency: an EU priority (environment committee vote, Weds.)**
- **Promoting recovery and investment with project bonds (budget committee vote, Weds.)**

Other EU priorities:

- **EU budget 2013 - re-tasking Europe's economy (Commission proposal, Weds.)**
 - **Storing private passenger data in the EU (home affairs council, Thurs.)**
 - **Schengen under siege (home affairs council, Thurs. - Fri.)**
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Equal pay for equal work

Tues. 24 Apr. - Women's rights committee vote

The EP women's rights committee will vote on a report calling for equal pay for equal work and recommending measures to this end. The Greens believe 'equal pay for equal work' is a core principle, which should guide employment policy in the EU. Individuals doing the same work should receive the same remuneration, regardless of gender or other factors. This is currently not the case and there is a need for more to be done to redress this.

Mobile phone roaming - a small step forward

Tues. 24 Apr. - Industry committee vote

MEPs on the industry committee are set to endorse a deal reached with the Council to revise EU rules governing mobile phone roaming charges in the EU. The deal will lead to lower charges for mobile phone users when roaming across borders and, as such, is a welcome step but the Greens have expressed regret that a comprehensive solution to bring down exorbitant and artificially high roaming costs was not possible, particularly for data roaming. (see [latest press release](#))

Reform of staff regulations for EU officials

Weds. 25 Apr. - Legal affairs committee vote

Proposals to reform the EU staff regulations, which govern the recruitment and employment terms of EU officials, will be voted on by MEPs in the legal affairs committee. The Greens believe that the Commission proposal wrongly tries to make savings at the expense of lower grade/paid staff, which undermines social justice. Beyond the thorny question of remuneration of officials on higher grades, the Greens have a number of priorities, notably providing clear rules to protect whistleblowers, as well as rules to prevent conflict of interests and the practice of 'revolving doors' between high level institution staff and sectoral interests.

Taxing financial transactions in the EU

Weds. 25 Apr. - Economic and financial affairs committee vote

MEPs will vote on proposals to introduce an EU financial transaction tax (FTT). The Greens have long advocated the introduction of an FTT. The FTT would both help curb risky financial speculation and generate much-needed revenue for under pressure exchequers (such as for development or climate aid, or as part as an EU system of own resources). The FTT should ideally apply in the EU as a whole but there is need to push forward with the proposals as swiftly as possible via enhanced cooperation with the widest possible group of EU members. The Greens believe exempting pension funds from the FTT is not a good approach long term. (see [latest press release](#))

Resource efficiency: an EU priority

Weds. 25 Apr. - Environment committee vote

With the European Commission having presented its resource efficiency roadmap last year, MEPs on the environment committee are set to vote on the EP approach. The Greens believe resource efficiency should be a core priority for the EU, with a view to promoting innovation, reducing our dependence on imported resources and helping to achieve the EU's climate, energy and environmental goals. The group believes the well-intentioned approach outlined by the Commission is undermined by a lack of concrete measures and clear targets. (see [latest press release](#))

Promoting recovery and investment with project bonds

Weds. 25 Apr. - Budget committee vote

The budget committee will vote on proposals to amend EU rules on funding for trans-European energy, transport and ICT networks, with a view to establishing a pilot phase for project bonds. The Greens have long supported project bonds as a crucial tool for stimulating investment in green technologies and sustainable economic innovation, highlighting the potential for leveraging additional finance. For the Greens, it is crucial that these bonds are used primarily to promote sustainable energy and transport projects however.

EU budget 2013 - re-tasking Europe's economy

Weds. 25 Apr. - EU Commission proposal

The Commission is set to outline its proposals for the EU budget for 2013, launching the latest round of wrangling. The Greens believe the EU budget should be a key tool for stimulating economic recovery in response to the Euro crisis. This means targeting funding to promote the sustainable transformation of the economy by prioritising investment in green technologies, which would help create millions of jobs. The Commission should correct the imbalance in funding

towards nuclear energy and fossil fuels vis-a-vis safe and sustainable energy technologies, like renewables and energy efficiency. We should not be pouring any more money down the black hole that is the ITER nuclear fusion project.

Storing private passenger data in the EU

Thurs. 26 Apr. - EU home affairs ministers council

With the controversial EU-US passenger data (PNR) deal having just been given the go-ahead by the EP, home affairs ministers are set to consider proposals by the Commission to set up a similar system in the EU for storing the private data of air passengers. There is no evidence that these far-reaching data retention measures do anything to achieve their stated aim of ensuring greater security. Instead, they compromise EU citizens' privacy and civil liberties. The Greens will push for the EP to reject this ever-creeping lurch to more pervasive surveillance. (click for [latest press release](#))

Schengen under siege

Thurs. - Fri. 26-27 Apr. - EU home affairs ministers council

The EU's border-free Schengen system is coming under renewed pressure, notably in the context of the French election campaign, with the French and German governments set to present proposals to EU home affairs ministers aimed at facilitating the reintroduction of border controls. Proposing the reintroduction of border controls is knee-jerk populism, which does nothing to address the real problems. Any decision on the reintroduction of border controls should be decided at EU level and only in exceptional circumstances. Home affairs ministers should instead finally adopt the EU asylum package.

EU rules for a more robust banking sector

LAter date - Economic and financial affairs committee vote

Two important legislative proposals aimed at strengthening the banks and credit institutions will be voted by the economic and financial affairs committee. The current financial has made clear that the regulations governing the banking sector are not up to the task. The Greens support the proposals for stricter capital requirements and enforcement, as well as to strengthen corporate governance and reduce reliance on external rating agencies.