



Strasbourg Flash

Priorities for the Greens/EFA group for 21-25 May 2012

Euro crisis: shifting the focus from austerity

Tues. 22 May - Key debate; informal EU summit Weds.

Ahead of the EU summit, MEPs will hold a headline debate with the Commission and Council. The changing political landscape is raising hopes for a shift in course from the failing response to the Euro crisis. The Greens have long argued that the one-sided focus on austerity has made the situation worse. There needs to be a much greater focus on measures to turn the economy around, through using EU funds to promote sustainable investments and clamping down on tax evasion. The ongoing pressure on Eurozone sovereigns continues to underline the need for a more robust firewall and sovereign debt mutualisation.

Bluefin tuna on the brink - new EU rules

Tues. 22 May - Plenary debate; vote Weds. (Romeva report)

With the fishing season for the endangered and iconic bluefin tuna having just opened, MEPs will vote on new EU legislation, implementing internationally-agreed rules (ICCAT). In addition to quotas, these rules set the conditions, practice and equipment for fishing and farming. Unfortunately, this legislation represents a minimalist implementation of the EU's international obligations. If the EU was serious about saving bluefin, it would adopt more ambitious measures, including closing areas for bluefin fishing, notably during the breeding season.

Strasbourg priorities press briefing with Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms**

Tuesday, 22 May, 10.20-10.40 - Press Conference Room EP, Strasbourg

Trade with China - striking the right balance

Tues. 22 May - Plenary debate; vote Weds. (De Sarnez report)

EU-China trade relations are in focus, with the EU running a trade deficit of €170 billion/year and China buying EU sovereign debt. Populist claims that China's success stems from breaking trade laws and global standards do not cut it. The Greens believe that defensive protectionism is not in Europe's interest and that we instead need to finally pursue a long-term industrial policy, cooperate with China in promoting green tech and a sustainable economic transformation, while getting China to respect human rights and social and environmental standards.

Ukraine: backslide on rights and democracy

Tues. 22 May - Plenary debate with Commission and vote

While the disturbing situation surrounding the detention and treatment of former Ukrainian prime minister Yulia Tymoshenko has rightly made headlines, there are wider concerns about human rights abuses and the persecution of political opponents by the Ukrainian government. With the European football championships about to kick-off in the Ukraine, the country is even more under the spotlight. MEPs will debate the situation in the Ukraine, which the Greens believe should lead to a shift in the EU's relations with the country.

How to lift Greece out of the crisis Press conference on alternative Green proposals with Greens/EFA co-presidents **Dany Cohn-Bendit** and **Rebecca Harms** and Greek Green MEP **Nikos Chrysogelos**

Wednesday, 23 May, 11.30-12.00 - Press Conference Room EP, Strasbourg

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

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Taxing financial transactions in the EU

Weds. 23 May - Plenary debate and vote (Podimata report)

MEPs will vote on proposals to introduce an EU financial transaction tax (FTT). The Greens have long advocated the introduction of an FTT both to help curb risky financial speculation and generate much-needed revenue for under-pressure exchequers (such as for development aid). The FTT should ideally apply in the EU as a whole but there is need to move forward, such as through 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.

Equal pay for equal work

Thurs. 24 May - Plenary debate and vote (Bauer report)

Despite longstanding EU and national legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment terms between women and men, equal pay for equal work is still not a reality. MEPs vote on a report calling for equal pay for equal work and recommending measures to this end. 'Equal pay for equal work' is a core principle, which should guide employment policy. 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.

Resource efficiency: an EU priority

Weds. 23 May - Plenary debate; vote Thurs. (Gebrandy report)

With the EU Commission having presented its resource efficiency roadmap last year, the European Parliament will vote to set out its position. 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 approach outlined by the Commission is undermined by a lack of concrete measures and clear targets, and wants the EP to call for this to be redressed.

How to restructure the banking sector

High-level conference

with Paul Vocker, Sir John Vickers and Michel Barnier

Friday, 25 May, 9.30-13.00 - Room 1A002 EP, Brussels

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