



# Strasbourg Flash

## Priorities for the Greens/EFA group for 10-14 September 2012

### Illegal CIA activities in the EU

Mon. 10 Sept. - Plenary debate; vote Tues. (Flautre report)

5 years after an original special inquiry on CIA abuses and illegal activities in EU member states by the EP, MEPs are set to adopt a new report highlighting fresh revelations of abuses and calling for proper accountability. The report deals with new evidence of human rights violations, secret detention centres and extraordinary 'renditions' in EU member states - notably Romania, Poland and Lithuania, but also other in other countries like the UK. It also sets out concrete recommendations to the EU's institutions to improve the accountability process.

\* Press conference 11.30 - EP press room \*

### New EU rules on energy saving

Tues. 11 Sept. - Plenary debate and vote. (Turmes report)

New EU rules on energy efficiency and saving are set to be endorsed by MEPs. The final legislative deal goes some way to closing the gap for the EU to meet its 2020 target of 20% energy savings, creating jobs and boosting the economy at the same time. As well as providing a legal architecture for the 20% target, the final legislation includes a number of crucial binding measures, notably an annual energy saving obligation. EP draftsman and Green MEP Claude Turmes is calling for quick implementation but is concerned at German attempts to scale back some provisions.

\* Press conference 14.00 - EP press room \*

### Strasbourg priorities press briefing

with Greens/EFA co-presidents **Dany Cohn-Bendit** and **Rebecca Harms**

Tuesday, 11 September, 10.30-10.50 - Press Conference Room EP, Strasbourg

### Limiting pollution from shipping

Tues. 11 Sept. - Plenary debate and vote. (Hassi report)

MEPs are set to endorse an agreement on new EU legislation on reducing sulphur pollution from ships, brokered by Green EP draftsman/rapporteur Satu Hassi. The rules will introduce stricter limits on sulphur emissions from ships for Sulphur Emission Control Areas by 2015 and for all EU seas by 2020, and ensure the EU lives up to international commitments. Under the deal, the Commission is also tasked with considering an extension of stricter limits on ships in ports to all ships in territorial waters. This would have major public health and environment benefits.

### EU budget 2013 - lines in the sand

Tues. 11 Sept. - Plenary debate with Council

EU governments in Council have tabled blunt cuts to the 2013 EU budget proposed by the Commission. While fiscal difficulties across Europe necessarily have implications for the EU budget, across-the-board cuts are an inappropriate way of addressing this. Not only do they undermine the EU's ability to deliver on priorities it has set for itself, notably measures to stimulate economic recovery like the growth pact, the cuts also jeopardise existing EU programmes, which are underway and are being implemented on the expectation of funds already committed for 2013.

### Tackling corporate tax avoidance

Tues. 11 Sept. - Plenary vote. (Gall-Pelcz report)

The EP will adopt its opinion on draft revised EU legislation aimed at limiting the current practise of companies and artists of channelling profits through different member states to avoid their tax responsibility. The Greens regret that the proposals do not go further with a view to eliminating tax avoidance schemes like the 'Double Irish' and the 'Dutch sandwich'. The group also pushed for the inclusion of calls to further limit the scope for corporate tax avoidance through an effective minimum EU corporate tax rate. Council should act on this.

### Russia and the rule of law

Tues. 11 Sept. - Plenary debate with EU foreign policy HR

Recent events in Russia, notably the politically-motivated trial and conviction of Pussy Riot, have highlighted major concerns about the rule of law and basic rights in Russia since the re-election of Vladimir Putin as president. MEPs are set to debate this with the EU's high representative for foreign policy. The Greens believe the EU should be more honest and be critical of the deteriorating situation in its dialogue with Russia. Russia cannot be a strategic partner for the EU if fundamental conflicts exist between our values and goals.

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED OVERLEAF

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### Sustainable fisheries and consumption

Tues. 11 Sept. - Plenary debate; vote Tues. (Stevenson report)

The first of a set of legislative proposals reforming the EU's Common Fisheries Policy will be voted on by MEPs. The draft rules on market organisation include proposals for more detailed consumer labels. With the ostensible goal of CFP reform to promote sustainable fisheries, the Greens believe labels should state whether the fish stock is over-exploited and how it was caught, however this was not supported by the majority. The group also believes subsidies for storing/freezing fish when prices are too low should be phased out. The best place to store fish is alive in the sea.

### EU economic and banking union

Weds. 12 Sept. - Plenary debate with Commission president

The Commission will present new elements of the proposed banking union, with president Barroso expected to focus on this in his State of the Union address. EU-wide banking supervision is essential but must be accompanied by provisions on democratic accountability and, if entrusted to the ECB, a strict separation with its monetary policy role. The underlying goals of the banking union must include breaking the toxic link between banks and sovereigns (notably by allowing the ESM to directly lend to banks) and ensuring the public doesn't bear the burden of bank failures (by creating sufficient bank resolution and deposit guarantee funds).

### European venture capital funds

Weds. 12 Sept. - EP debate; vote Thurs. (Lamberts report)

MEPs are set to vote on new draft EU legislation on venture capital funds, which is being shepherded through the EP by Green draftsperson Philippe Lamberts. The draft legislation creates a uniform rule book allowing European venture capital funds to raise capital and invest freely within the EU. It would also establish an EU passport for the funds, which would be an important measure to overcome the current market fragmentation, which undermines venture capital performance in Europe.

### Democratic rollback in Romania

Weds. 12 Sept. - MEPs debate with Council and Commission

Despite the EU Commission having raised serious questions about rollback of democracy in Romania, following a series of emergency decisions taken by the Ponta-led government, concerns remain and MEPs will debate this with the Council and Commission. The Greens believe the failure by Romania to address the concerns raised must be met with the appropriate sanctions, notably the start of a procedure under Article 7(1) of the EU treaty. The EU institutions should be consistent in upholding European democratic values and not get bogged down in political tit-for-tat.

### Energy agreements and security of supply

Weds. 12 Sept. - Plenary debate; vote Thurs. (Karins report)

Given concerns about security of energy supply and competition, the Commission proposed new legislation aimed at ensuring proper coordination of member states' energy agreements with third countries. Currently member states do not have to inform the Commission or other member states about such agreements. The Greens believe it should be mandatory to report on negotiations on these agreements and that the Commission should be able to input into these EU-relevant agreements. Regrettably the final deal to be adopted by MEPs is weak and includes no mandatory reporting.

### EP access to classified documents

Thurs. 13 Sept. - Plenary debate and vote (Häfner report)

The European Parliament is set to finally get access to classified documents from the Council under an inter-institutional agreement, which is set to be adopted by MEPs this week. This access is essential for the EP to be able to effectively exercise its functions, notably in view of its expanded competences under the Lisbon Treaty, for example with regard to international agreements. A similar agreement already exists with the Commission.

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