



# Strasbourg Flash

## Priorities for the Greens/EFA group for 14-18 January 201

### Tackling youth unemployment in Europe

Mon. 14 Jan. - EP debate; vote Tues.

Unemployment is sky-rocketing in crisis-hit EU member states, with youth unemployment particularly worrying (at around 50% in Greece and 35% in Spain for example). The Greens have been to the fore in advocating for a binding youth guarantee to address this problem. With the European Commission having set out proposals to this end, the group wants to put pressure on EU governments to act. To this end, Green MEPs have tabled an oral question and the issue will be debated, with a resolution also to be voted by MEPs this week.

### Corruption and misuse of EU funds

Weds. 16 Jan. - EP debate with Council and Commission

MEPs are set to debate corruption and the misuse of EU funds. While the EP's special committee on organised crime has investigated evidence of a specific case of misappropriated EU funds in Italy, the problem is pervasive and present in many other EU member states. The Greens are supportive of efforts to strengthen EU action to prevent such abuses. Apart from the obvious step of confiscating the proceeds of crime, this notably includes enhancing police and judicial cooperation and finally establishing a European public prosecutor.

### Strasbourg priorities press briefing

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

Tuesday, 15 January, 11.20-11.40 - Press Conference Room EP, Strasbourg

### Biopiracy and indigenous genetic resources

Mon. 14 Jan. - EP debate; vote Tues. (Grèze report)

MEPs will vote on a report by Green draftsman Catherine Grèze on the intellectual property rights of genetic resources in developing countries. Biopiracy is a major problem in developing countries, flying in the face of poverty reduction measures, notably for indigenous communities. This report outlines the problem and sets out measures to protect the intellectual property rights for genetic resources in poorer countries and regions. It includes proposals for action both at EU level and in terms of global governance.

### Contested agreement with southern Africa

Weds. 16 Jan. - EP debate; vote Thurs. (Caspary report)

An interim Economic Partnership Agreement with 4 southern African countries is up for endorsement by MEPs. The Greens believe the EP should not give its consent to this controversial agreement, the first of its kind to be concluded in Africa. The agreement would undermine regional integration and threatens development in poorer countries, which would have to eliminate tariffs, resulting in revenue loss, as well as the impact on local producers of competing with tariff-free imports from the EU. The agreement also includes governments with questionable human rights records (e.g. Zimbabwe and Madagascar).

### Regulating credit rating agencies

Mon. 14 Jan. - EP debate; vote Tues. (Domenici reports)

The EP will vote on new rules on the role of ratings agencies. The Greens believe the final compromise on the new legislation represents a moderate step forward for regulating this influential sector but regretted it was not possible to achieve more ambitious provisions to change the market structure and prevent conflicts of interest. Regrettably, proposals to move from the current problematic and simplistic letter-based system (AAA) to a figure-based system, giving greater transparency on the situation and the likelihood of default, were seriously weakened.

### Working conditions in Asia and EU retailers

Weds. 16 Jan. - EP debate; vote Thurs.

Poor working conditions in production facilities in Asia supplying the EU market have once again come under the spotlight, with recent factory fires (notably in Bangladesh and Pakistan), as well as evidence on the use of toxic components and the impacts on workers. The EP is set to debate the issue and adopt a resolution to this end. The current EU approach to corporate social responsibility puts the onus on retailers and producers to address the issue but clearly more effort is needed. It also raises implications for EU trade policy and the conditions attached.

### Greens/EFA Press Team

- **Helmut Weixler (Team head): Mobile +32 475 671340, Ph. +33-3-88174760**
- **Isabelle Zerrouk: Mobile +32 477 319474, Ph. +33-3-88174032**
- **Richard More O'Ferrall: Mobile +32 477 443842**
- **Steven Cornelius (EFA Press Service): Ph. +33-3-88172936**

