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News | 25.06.2011

Green Round-up

Debriefing of the week including plenary session in Brussels (22-23 June 2011)

IMPROVING ROAD SAFETY IN EUROPE

Report

Committee on Transport and Tourism

Committee vote Tuesday 21 June 2011 The committee on transport and tourism of the European Parliament voted on a report setting out how to improve road safety across Europe. The Greens welcomed the outcome of the vote since the two important Green proposals have been taken on board in the report adopted, namely the recommendation for speed limits of 30 km/h in all urban areas in Europe, as well as the introduction of a harmonised EU-wide blood-alcohol limit

- [Greens/EFA press release](#)

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Enforcement and implementation of EU legislation

Report by Green MEP Eva Lichtenberger

Committee on Legal Affairs

Committee vote Tuesday 21 June 2011

The implementation and enforcement of EU legislation remains a major problem, as revealed in this report by Green draftsperson Eva Lichtenberger. The report highlights the Commission's power and duty to bring infringement proceedings against a Member State that has failed to fulfil an obligation under the Treaties and urges the Commission to guarantee that citizens are not excluded (as it is now the case) when dealing with the compliance of EU law. The report was adopted with unanimity. Next step will be the plenary vote most probably in September

- [Text of the report by Eva Lichtenberger](#)

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Economic governance pack legislation

Legislative reports

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs

Plenary debate Wednesday 22 June - plenary vote Thursday 23 June The Greens have been critical of the narrow focus of the package and voted against some of the reports in committee stage. The group believes that enforcement measures must be part of a broader economic framework, including much stronger economic policy coordination and fiscal convergence. Such a framework must tackle excessive macroeconomic deficits and surpluses. It should also encompass incentives and solidarity mechanisms, such as Eurobonds and promote a balanced approach aiming at enhancing sustainable public investments while ensuring a responsible consolidation of public finances.

The European Parliament adopted the six reports of the so-called pack on economic governance legislation, with negotiations between the European Parliament and Council still ongoing. The Greens supported the reports on the macro-economic pillar, which will provide a comprehensive and systemic approach to preventing future crises. The group also supported the report on establishing fiscal frameworks, which will provide for the necessary transparency and independent verification of budgetary data (Haglund, Ferreira and Ford reports). While the Greens agree with the urgent need to introduce tougher economic governance and reform the stability and growth pact, the group voted against three of the six reports, which it believes commit the EU to an unhealthy reliance on unbalanced austerity measures to achieve budget balances (Wortmann-Kool, Feio and Goulard reports).

- [Texts adopted by EP](#)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)
- Plenary speech by Green MEPs [Philippe Lamberts](#) and [Sven Giegold](#)

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Greenhouse gas emissions reductions and risks of carbon leakage

*Initiative report by Green MEP **Bas Eickhout***

Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

Plenary debate Wednesday 22 June - plenary vote Thursday 23 June This report by Green draftsman Bas Eickhout makes clear the overwhelming economic and environmental benefits from strengthening the EU 2020 greenhouse gas reduction target. The EP environment committee supported the report's call to strengthen the target to a 30% reduction by 2020, as opposed to the current 20% target.

Due to an unexpected motion to postpone the vote almost at the end of a long voting session, the vote on the report was carried forward to the next part-session, and will now take place in the July session (4-7).

- [Text of the report as adopted in committee](#)
- [Plenary speech by Green MEP **Bas Eickhout**](#)

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Spent fuel and radioactive waste

Report - Consultation procedure

Committee on the Industry, Research and Energy

Plenary debate Wednesday 22 June - plenary vote Thursday 23 June The proposed EU rules on nuclear waste management and disposal aim to create the perception that the problems of nuclear waste are solved but nothing could be further from the truth. It is utterly irresponsible to believe that underground dumping of highly radioactive material for the next 100,000 years could be done in a safe way, as the conservative forces managed to get through the Plenary vote. Greens however managed to get a majority against the worst case scenario. Indeed, the European Parliament gave the mandate to the Commission -and Commissioner Oettinger - to defend its original proposal, i.e. to forbid the exportation of radioactive waste to third countries, against a vast majority of Member States which are pushing for lifting such an export ban. However, the adopted text did not forbid shipments of spent fuels to Russia, Ukraine or other third countries. Reprocessing, transmutation and other proposed rules remain also far too weak and fall far short of addressing the very real concerns with nuclear waste : the rules do not apply to nuclear waste from military use, waste from uranium mining or spent fuel that is to be sent for reprocessing. Despite the fact that some important amendments tabled by the Greens - calling for forbidding the disposal of radioactive waste in risky (e.g. seismic) zones, for putting spent fuels in dry storage rather than in pools and for full third party liability in case of accident - have been adopted by the Parliament, Greens abstained for the final vote.

- [Text adopted by EP](#)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)
- [Plenary speech by Green MEP Jean Lambert](#)

Further information:

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The future of the Common Agricultural Policy

Initiative report

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

Plenary debate Wednesday 22 June - plenary vote Thursday 23 June Ahead of the forthcoming debate on the future EU budget and reforming the Common Agricultural Policy, the EP voted on an opinion report setting out its supposed 'vision'. The Greens believe that promoting sustainable agriculture and food systems should be the top priority for the CAP. The group also wants to do away with some farm subsidy absurdities and "cap" the maximum payments per farm, with flexible ceilings for public benefits such as good environmental performance and generation of employment. The CAP should ensure fair incomes for farmers and not be damaging for developing countries.

The report was adopted with a large majority and the result is not bad. The Greens voted in favour. Among positive results, one can notice that the small farmers provisions were not kicked out despite the attempts of ALDE (Liberal Group), capping or "degressivity" of direct payments and non funding for clones and for cloned offspring remain in the text. Furthermore, adequate funding of pillar 2 was added. The bad parts of the adopted text are the list of agronomic features to increase resilience which was taken out and the text on cheap diesel, tax breaks etc for irrigation remains.

- [Text adopted by EP](#)
- Greens/EFA press release ([FR](#) - [DE](#))
- Plenary speech by Green MEPs [Martin Häusling](#) and [José Bové](#)

Further information:

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New President of the European Central Bank appointed

Following a hearing in the economic affairs committee, MEPs voted on the European Central Bank president-nominee Mario Draghi's candidacy. The ECB's handling of the financial and economic crisis has justifiably been criticised, with its dogged opposition to negotiated debt restructuring and insistence on punitive austerity as part of 'bail outs' clearly exacerbating the situation. The Greens were not fully satisfied with Mr Draghi's response to these concerns. The group also has questions about Mr Draghi's background and whether a financial industry insider is an appropriate choice to head the ECB. The Parliament adopted the report and appointed the new President of the European Central Bank. The Greens abstained. Further information:

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Consumer rights in the EU

Report

Committee on Internal Market and Consumer Protection

Vote Thursday 23 June 2011 The EP voted on a compromise agreement on an overhaul of the EU's legislation on consumer protection. After protracted negotiations, the Greens believe the end-compromise will deliver greater protection for consumers, even if a number of important Green priorities were not included, notably guarantees and unfair contract terms. Among the key improvements, consumers will have greater protection for digital purchases, making it safer to shop online, and will have the right to withdraw from a contract for 14 days after the purchase (or up to one year if the trader omitted information, with the trader bearing the costs of return in many cases).

The Greens voted in favour and the Consumer Rights Directive has been adopted with an overwhelming majority of 615 votes in favour, 16 against and 21 abstentions.

- [Text adopted by EP](#)
- [Greens/EFA press release](#)
- [Plenary speech by Green MEP Emilie Turunen](#)

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AND ALSO

Roundtable on traditional and plant remedies

This roundtable co-organised by 5 Green MEPs included representatives from the European Commission, the European Food Safety Authority, the European Medicines Agency and NGOs, as well as MEPs. You can see the video of the full meeting at <http://www.greenmediabox.eu/archive/2011/06/21/thmpd/>

Green Week in the EP

The Green week is seen by many as an opportunity for green washing. The Greens/EFA group reminds that it has pushed for Environmental Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) policies since the very beginning, with a Green MEP acting as rapporteur of the EMAS Regulation back in 2001. The group has combined tireless lobbying and awareness raising in the European Parliament with practical steps internally

in an attempt to lead by example. [Read more](#)

Green MEP Heidi Hautala joins the Finnish Government

Green MEP and Chair of the Subcommittee on Human Rights, **Heidi Hautala** (Finland), was elected as the new minister for development cooperation in the Finnish government. She will also be in charge of the state ownership policy. She will resign from the European Parliament and Ms. **Tarja Cronberg**, former minister of labour and member of the Finnish parliament, will replace Heidi Hautala as Member of the Greens/EFA Group.

The Greens/EFA welcomes a new member

Portuguese MEP **Rui Tavares** has announced his intention to join the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament as from 27 June. For the Greens, gaining a representative from an additional member state, Portugal, is a welcome development for communicating Green politics in the region.

***** *Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up : 8 July 2011*

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