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Greens/EFA Debriefing

Plenary week, 12-16 March 2018

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Commission ethics: questions remain on Selmayr appointment

Debate Monday 12 March

On a Greens/EFA initiative, a debate was held on the integrity of the Commission, focussing in particular on the recent appointment of Martin Selmayr as the Commission Secretary-General. In response to a series of problems regarding ethics and conflict of interests among the highest representatives in the European Commission, the Greens/EFA group has called for a postponement of the discharge of the Commission's budget and for the Parliament to be given the chance to properly scrutinise his appointment. The Budgetary Control Committee will vote on the Commission's discharge on March 26.

- [Press release](#)
- [Plenary speech by Greens/EFA Co-President Philippe Lamberts](#)

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PEST: first meeting for committee set up in wake of glyphosate saga

Monday 12 March

The new committee on the EU authorisation procedure for pesticides had its constitutive meeting to elect its Chair and Vice-Chairs. The committee, formed in response to the recent glyphosate saga, provides an opportunity to make sure the serious questions surrounding the EU pesticide authorisation process are properly answered. Greens/EFA MEP **Bart Staes** was nominated as the committee's co-rapporteur and will be full members of PEST together with **Michèle Rivasi**, **Maria Heubuch** and **Thomas Waitz** will be the Greens/EFA substitute members.

*"We want to make sure there can no re-run of the glyphosate saga. We will continue to give voice to the concerns raised by over a million people who signed the European Citizens' Initiative to ban glyphosate.", declared **Bart Staes**.*

- [Press release](#)
- [Greens/EFA work on glyphosate and pesticides](#)

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Brexit: parliament to set out its position

Debate Tuesday 13, Vote Wednesday 14 March

The European Parliament debated and voted with a large majority (554 votes in favour, 110 against, 51 abstentions) a resolution that forms the parliament's reaction to Theresa May's Mansion House speech and its chance to shape the position of the Council ahead of their meeting on 22-23 March. The Greens/EFA group welcomed the recent proposals from the Commission to put in place a backstop to protect the Good Friday Agreement.

For Greens/EFA Co-President, Philippe Lamberts, Theresa May must resolve the deep contradictions of her position. *"It is simply not possible for the UK to leave the single market and customs union and honour the Good Friday Agreement while still avoiding new regulatory barriers. Regulatory divergence would create a border that no magical thinking can erase. Something has to give, but it cannot be the stability of peace in Northern Ireland"*, he said.

- [Press release](#)
- [Plenary speech by Greens/EFA Co-President Philippe Lamberts](#)
- [Text adopted](#)
- [Greens/EFA and Brexit](#)

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Tax Justice: MEPs decided about the composition of new committee

Vote Tuesday 13 March

MEPs voted on the composition of the new special committee on financial crimes, tax evasion and tax avoidance (TAX3). The key priorities for the Greens/EFA group are to ensure the follow-up of the recommendations produced by the Panama Papers inquiry committee, investigate new or unexplored topics which emerged during these investigations (such as the practice of "golden visas" and digital taxation), and to look into the Paradise Papers. **Sven GIEGOLD**, **Eva JOLY** and **Molly SCOTT CATO** will be the full Members of this special committee for the Greens/EFA Group.

- [Mandate](#)
- [Latest press release](#)
- [Greens/EFA work on tax justice](#)

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Protection of investigative journalists in Europe: the case of Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and Martina Kušnírová

Debate on Wednesday 14 March

The Greens/EFA group called for this debate following the murder of the Slovak journalist Ján Kuciak and his partner Martina Kušnírová. From Thursday 8th to Friday 9th March, Greens/EFA MEP Benedek Jávor took part in a mission to Slovakia, organised in the wake of the murders. They met with NGOs, journalists, senior members of the Slovak government and police. A resolution will be voted on in April in which we will push for strong recommendations to be made on the protection of journalists in Europe.

Benedek Jávor said : *“Their deaths raise serious questions about freedom of the press in Slovakia and demonstrate the alarming depths of corruption in the country. The EU needs to stand up for these values too, by scaling up its efforts to protect journalists and whistle-blowers.”*

- [Plenary speech by Green MEP Benedek Jávor](#)
- [Greens/EFA work on whistleblowers](#)

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Multiannual Financial Framework and own resources post-2020

Debate Tuesday 13, vote Wednesday 14 March

The European Parliament has today voted on two reports, setting out its position on the Multiannual Financial Framework post 2020 and the reform of the European Union's system of own resources. On the MFF, the Greens/EFA group successfully pushed for the parliament's position to be brought further in line with sustainable development goals and to increase the climate related spending to 30% as soon as possible (and at the latest by 2027). On Own Resources, the Greens/EFA group welcomes the parliament's position in favour of a range of new own resources, including green and digital taxes and for the end of all rebates and corrective mechanisms. The Greens/EFA amendment aiming at doubling the funding of LIFE+ programme was adopted.

For Greens/EFA budget coordinator **Helga Trüpel** *"The UK's decision to leave the EU offers an opportunity to rebalance the EU's budget in favour of own resources. The end of the British veto is an opportunity to finally call time on the endless haggling over who will pay what. The next budget should be rebate-free. More importantly, it allows us to align EU funding with environmental and social goals. Introducing new carbon, plastic and digital taxes would help the EU meet its climate ambitions and ensure the big players like Google and Facebook pay their fair share."*

The Commission will publish its MFF regulation in early May, with the legal basis for the various programmes to follow at the end of the month.

- [Plenary speech by Green MEP Helga Trüpel](#)
- [Text adopted – Multiannual financial framework report](#)
- [Text adopted – Own resources report](#)
- [Press release](#)

Further information

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Common Consolidated Corporate Tax Base

Debate Wednesday 14, Vote Thursday 15 March

The European Parliament voted in favour of the revised proposals on establishing an EU-wide common consolidated corporate tax base (CCCTB). Establishing a CCCTB has been a long standing Greens/EFA demand. This is a revolutionary way to tax large companies operating in Member States in order to simplify corporate taxation and fight corporate tax avoidance, which costs the EU between €50 and €70 billion a year.

The Greens/EFA group put forward an amendment calling for a legislative proposal on a minimum corporate tax rate. This was defeated because of the vote of the Conservatives.

However, the parliament's position also includes welcome new measures on taxing the digital economy. *"The Greens/EFA group is leading the change when it comes to the thorny issue of digital taxation. By adding the notion of a 'virtual' permanent establishment, we can make sure that digital companies are taxed in the countries in which they deliver services, not just in the country where they can find the lowest tax rate"* said Green MEP **Eva Joly**.

- [Press release](#)
- [Text adopted](#)
- [Plenary speech by Green MEP Eva Joly](#)

Further information:

Greens/EFA motions for resolutions

- [Situation in Syria](#)
- [Arrest of human rights defenders in Sudan](#)
- [Situation in Maldives](#)
- [Corporate Social Responsibility in light of the recent Embraco case](#)
- [Motion for a resolution on US measures on EU farm support under the CAP \(in the context of Spanish olives\)](#)

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