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[Press release](#) | 08.07.2015

EU behaving like 'orchestra on the Titanic' over Greece

Press release from EFA MEP Ernest Maragall (Catalonia)

Responding to today's debate in the European Parliament with Greek Prime Minister Alexis Tsipras about the Greek debt crisis, Greens/EFA MEP **Ernest Maragall** said:



"As the Greek crisis continues to risk the future of the EU, showing up its fragility, lack of political union and economic governance, the European Parliament buries its head in the sand and just carries on. Changing course is difficult for such a big and slow ship, but that's precisely why we need an urgent change of priorities!"

"The world is ablaze around us – in Ukraine and the Middle East whilst the Mediterranean sea is becoming a cemetery. Why then are we so obsessed with the loss of European competitiveness – a non-existent loss given the colossal external surplus – and rather less so about inequality? As the OECD and even the IMF have said recently, inequality impedes growth and job creation and so it's not just a question of social justice but also of economic effectiveness."

"Nevertheless, the European Parliament debated and its 'grand coalition' this week approved a resolution to push forward with TTIP, seeing free trade as a panacea. And we saw a Commission work programme full of fine words but lacking in clear priorities, despite its supposed 'Big Themes.'"

"But how can such great ambitions be achieved with such a small EU budget? In proportional terms, it is 1/20th the size of the USA's budget, our supposed TTIP partner with whom we are told to plan a partnership of equals! Equals? Did anyone threaten California with exit from the dollar when it was forced to issue IOUs?"

"This is a decisive week in the life of the European Union. History will judge whether we raised our game to the challenges of the day, or whether, just as on the Titanic, we played the same old tune as the ship went down."

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Ernest Maragall

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