We call for an urgent change in the direction of EU policy on refugees. The Council wants to put up more walls around Fortress Europe and keep turning desperate people away from Europe by force. It has agreed to develop an action plan with Turkey with the aim of keeping refugees there, instead of respecting their rights to individual examinations for international protection and asylum. We cannot accept a dirty deal with Erdoğan. He wants the EU to turn a blind eye to his war on the Kurdish people, while the EU gives him funding to take in refugees. We call for an immediate end to Erdogan's war on the Kurdish people. The EU needs safe and legal pathways for refugees, a relocation mechanism based on solidarity and member states’ economic capacities, as well as refugees’ individual needs.

**European Council Conclusions**

Gabi Zimmer, GUE/NGL President, Germany

The proposal from the Commission on GMOs was a complete cop-out. President Juncker has completely dodged the commitments he made as a candidate for presidency to correct the lack of democracy which currently exists in decision-making for GMOs in the EU. The Environment Committee rightly voted down this half-baked proposal but it is now time for Juncker to make good on his promise and make one which delivers what is necessary.

**GMOs**

Lynn Boylan, Ireland

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**Novel Foods**

Lynn Boylan, Ireland

Citizens have very legitimate concerns regarding the effects novel foods will have on their health and the environment. In particular, the effects of the use of very new technologies such as engineered nano-materials being used in food for consumption remain largely unknown. I believe that the precautionary principle should always be used for food safety issues. I am disappointed that coming out of this proposal, the Commission will not be obliged to seek a second opinion from EFSA.

**European Structural and Investment Funds**

Martina Anderson - Ireland

European Structural and Investment funding is a vital solidarity tool providing important investment support to regional and local communities. It is disconcerting to see the introduction of a mechanism that turns this funding into an instrument of austerity, allowing the suspension or reprogramming of funds to regional and local authorities for budgetary issues at a national level. This mechanism should not be used, and we have tabled a resolution criticising the mechanism, as well as the undemocratic way it was imposed, and calling for its removal.

**Commission work Programme 2016**

Inês Zuber - Portugal

The Commission Work Programme, as proposed, continues the path towards the deepening of the economic and social crisis whilst maintaining the failure in the accurate identification of its root causes, as it persists in the implementation of neo-liberal and austerity oriented policies. A rupture with these policies is mandatory, and the work programme should be orientated, amongst others, to the revocation of the economic governance legislation and the EMU framework.
The agreement that we will be voting threw out two of the main issues: roaming and the most important of all – net neutrality. Internet is definitely a common good, a fundamental right. All citizens must have access to it without discrimination, the same way they can travel on roads that were built centuries ago to connect people. We need to save net neutrality.

European single market for electronic communications  Marisa Matias - Portugal

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European Semester  Marisa Matias - Portugal

Despite all the compromises to incorporate the different visions and proposals, there is still a really thick line dividing us: austerity as a rule. We need solidarity not austerity. We need to stop treating deficits as sinners and surpluses as righteous. Surplus is not a naturally positive dimension. We cannot accept that workers, once again, have to pay the costs.

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