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Greens/EFA Round-up

Debriefing of the plenary week Strasbourg 18-22 November 2013

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Public procurement and global rules

Legislative report (Scholz report)

Committee on International Trade

Plenary debate Monday 18th November 2013 - vote Tuesday 19th November 2013

Revised rules on how public procurement is regulated at international level were voted on by MEPs Tuesday. The Government Procurement Agreement obliges its parties, which include the EU, to open up their public procurement markets, making them accessible to providers from third countries. The Greens have major concerns about the agreement and voted against. The EU's recently improved rules on public procurement aim to ensure that key factors like ethical labour conditions, sustainability and environment protection, are central to awarding public tenders; moreover, public procurement is an important tool to pursue public and industrial policy goals. Both aspects risk being overturned by the backdoor through the GPA.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/FR)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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MFF: EU budget 2014-2020

*Interinstitutional agreement (Dehaene, Kalfin Reports)
Plenary debate & vote Tuesday 19th November 2013*

The final agreement on the EU's multiannual financial framework (2014-20) was confirmed by MEPs Tuesday, the first time the EP has had a say role on the EU's budgetary framework. The Greens voted against the final outcome which includes largely meaningless compromises on the key outstanding issues and represents a backward looking deal. The proposals on own resources is aspirational and stand almost no chance of being respected, the review clause will mean nothing as the unanimity rule has been kept and budgetary flexibility is reduced to a minimum. Thus, this is no 'compensation' for the Parliament accepting the massively scaled-down ambition of the overall MFF and the Green group regrets that MEPs rolled over and accepted this bad outcome for Europe.

- [Press Release & Plenary Speech](#): Dany Cohn-Bendit (EN/DE/FR)
- [EU Budget: Myth versus Reality](#) – Greens/EFA online tool
- [Texts adopted](#) (*only available in Word format*)

Further information:

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Funding EU energy and transport systems

*Multiple reports (Valean, Riquet, Ayala-Sender)
Committee on Transport and Tourism*

Plenary debate Monday 18th November 2013 - vote Tuesday 19th November 2013

EU funds for key energy and transport infrastructure projects were voted on by MEPs Tuesday. While the Greens believe the energy side of the Connecting Europe Facility will play a positive and important role in

developing European infrastructure and energy networks, with a view to facilitating a renewable energy-powered system, the group has major problems with the transport side. Unsustainable and environmentally-damaging transport infrastructure projects are set to get a significant share of the funds, flying in the face of EU environment and climate goals. For these reasons the Greens voted against the reports.

- [Plenary speech - Claude Turmes](#) (EN/DE)
- [Plenary Speech - Michael Cramer](#) (DE)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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Erasmus +: Promoting European education

The European Parliament adopted on 19 November 2013 the Erasmus +, a six-year (2014-2020) EU programme for education, training, youth and sports. It will allow more than 5 million people to participate in European mobility programmes. With a budget of 13.1 billion euros, Erasmus + benefits from a 40% increase in its budget compared to the last programme. The Greens were successful in introducing a loan facility for students in the text, but recall the importance of supervision of this facility to avoid indebtedness of beneficiaries. However, we regret that the new programme does not cover unemployed young people.

- [Webarticle](#) (FR)
- [Plenary intervention - Malika Benarab-Attou](#) (FR)
- [Plenary intervention – Helga Trüpel](#) (DE)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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Europe for Citizens

The European Parliament adopted on 19 November 2013 the new “Europe for Citizens” programme, aimed at improving EU citizens' knowledge of the EU and its history. The programme will support activities such as public conferences, targeted at fostering remembrance of the EU's past and increasing debate and citizens' interest and involvement with EU issues at EU level. However, although Greens support and will vote in favour of the programme, the group believes that the budget is too small to respond to the challenges faced by the European Union.

- [Webarticle](#) (EN)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

EU nuclear energy spending

*Several reports - (Skinner, Krahmer, Chichester, Remek)
Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
Tues. 19 Nov. - EP vote*

The European Parliament adopted on Tuesday 19 November 2013 four reports relating to EU nuclear energy spending. Sadly, EU funds will continue to flow towards the nuclear industry over the coming budgetary period (2014-20). The Greens wanted the EU's nuclear budget to be cut and for research to be limited to medical applications, radiation protection and safety but this will not be the case. Despite the massive public subsidies already received by the nuclear industry, EU funds will continue to flow to nuclear. The Greens believe it is high time to change the legal basis, with a view to ensuring the EP has a say as a co-decider on nuclear funds.

One of the reports concerned funding for the experimental nuclear fusion project ITER. The Greens regret that the disproportionate contribution towards ITER from the EU budget is set to continue. Apart from the fact that Europe contributes far more public funds than any other single international partner to the ITER project, there are serious questions to be asked about spending such a large amount of taxpayers' money on research into an energy technology with which there are serious doubts that it will ever be commercially viable, as well as potential risks. The Greens were unsuccessful in the bid to ensure no more money from the EU budget to go towards ITER.

All Green amendments were voted down. We therefore voted against three of the reports (Skinner, Krahmer, Remek). The only positive outcome of these votes is that the EU will continue to finance the decommissioning of the most dangerous reactors in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Slovakia. This is why we eventually abstained on the Chichester report.

- Web article [Budget Euratom](#) (FR)
- Web article [ITER - fusion nucléaire](#) (FR)

Texts adopted:

- [European Atomic Energy Community research and training programme](#)
(Skinner report): Green shadow Michèle Rivasi
- [Nuclear safety cooperation instrument](#)
(Krahmer report): Green shadow Rebecca Harms
- [Nuclear decommissioning assistance programmes](#)
(Chichester report): Green shadow Rebecca Harms
- [Supplementary research programme for the ITER project 2014-18](#)
(Remek report): Green shadow Michèle Rivasi

Further information:

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Rules on EU spending to hit crisis countries

Legislative report (Van Nistelrooij, Krehl report)

Committee on Regional Development

Plenary debate Tuesday 19th November 2013 - vote Wednesday 20th November 2013

New rules governing how EU structural and investment funds are disbursed were confirmed by MEPs on Wednesday, but by a poor majority. The Greens have major concerns about a key provision of the 'common provisions regulation' on macroeconomic conditionality, which would allow the Commission to propose suspending EU funds for regions in member states under excessive deficit procedures under the Stability and Growth Pact. This wrongheaded provision implies a double sanction of countries already in economic difficulty. We pushed for this provision to be overturned but in the end were unable to vote due to a scandalous procedural decision by EP president Schulz and as a result abstained in the final vote.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/DE/FR)
- [Plenary speech – Elisabeth Schroedter](#) (EN/DE)
- [Plenary Speech – Karima Delli](#) (FR)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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European Social Fund

Legislative report (La Via report)

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Plenary debate Tuesday 19th November 2013 – vote Wednesday 20th November 2013

A proposal on the allocation of additional funds under the European Social Fund (ESF) was voted on by MEPs Tuesday. The funds for action on unemployment are foreseen to be exclusively allocated to France, Spain and Italy, as part of a backroom deal to compensate them for the outcome of the multiannual financial framework. The Greens criticised the failure to extend this to other countries and the failure of the Parliament to overturn it. MEPs should have ensured these funds - intended for action on youth unemployment - target all of the crisis countries, which are experiencing massive problems with youth unemployment.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/DE)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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Supporting cohesion and our regions

Multiple reports (Olbrycht, Bostinaru & Zeller reports)

Committee on Regional Development

Plenary debate Tuesday 19th November 2013 - vote Wednesday 20th November 2013

MEPs approved the next funding period on cohesion and regional policy. Although containing weaknesses in places, the outcome was a definite step forward with provisions the group had pushed for throughout the process. These included greater protection of rights of people with disabilities, no funding for construction of nuclear power plants, more funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy in public buildings and the housing sector and for sustainable urban mobility. However, we were against macroeconomic conditionality being in the regulation of the Cohesion Fund and are disappointed that regions and the beneficiaries of the programmes can be sanctioned by having their funding cut

- [Webarticle](#) (EN / Greek)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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Common Agricultural Policy reform: Missed chance

Various reports: Capoulas Santos; Dantin; La Via; Capoulas Santos; Dess

Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development

Plenary debate & vote Wednesday 20th November 2013

The long-awaited revision of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy was confirmed by MEPs Wednesday. The Greens strongly criticised the outcome, which is much worse than the position voted by the EP earlier in the year, and will fail to provide for the fundamental reform the CAP needs. Key provisions to cap or limit problematic direct payments to farmers have been hollowed out. This is compounded by provisions to allow the diversion of funds aimed at supporting more sustainable farming to direct payments. The final outcome also allows the use of pesticides and GMOs in ecological focus areas, while damaging export refunds will see EU products continued to be dumped in developing markets.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/DE/FR)
- [Plenary speech – José Bové](#) (FR)
- [Plenary Speech – Martin Hausling](#) (DE)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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Horizon 2020: research and innovation spending

Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
Weds. 20 Nov. – EP debate; vote Thurs.

The European Parliament adopted on 21 November 2013 a series of legislative files setting out the EU's research and innovation funding programme 2014-20, Horizon 2020. The Greens gave a broad welcome to the programme but expressed regret that it failed to clearly exclude firms from illegal Israeli settlements from receiving EU funds. For the Greens the direction of the new programme is positive. The Greens are happy that sustainable energy will be prioritised and that resource efficiency and sustainability will be a focus throughout Horizon 2020. SMEs will get earmarked funds and there will be a social aspect to research and innovation. However, the final outcome is overshadowed both by the reduced ambition of the overall budget and the failure to ensure strict provisions excluding firms located in the illegal Israeli settlements from benefitting from Horizon 2020 funds.

Texts adopted:

- [Horizon 2020 - framework programme for research and innovation](#) (Riera Madurell report)
- [Rules for the participation and dissemination in Horizon 2020](#) (Ehler report)
- [Specific programme implementing Horizon 2020](#) (Carvalho report)
- [Strategic innovation agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) (Matias report)
- [European Institute of Innovation and Technology](#) (Lamberts report)

Further information:

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Competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises

(Creutzmann report) - Green shadow Reinhard Bütikofer
Committee on Industry, Research and Energy
Weds. 20 Nov. – EP debate; vote Thurs. 21 Nov. 2013

The European Parliament has endorsed the COSME programme on 21 November 2013, which aims to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of EU enterprises, particularly SMEs. The new programme will help address the competitiveness and sustainability of EU enterprises, promote entrepreneurship and improve access to finance and to markets. While the Greens would have preferred sustainability to play a more central role, the Group is still happy that the programme maintains it as an objective. The report rightly emphasises that access to skills, including managerial skills and knowledge (and not only access to finance), are critical factors for SMEs. The Greens also welcome the initiative to involve stakeholders in the drafting of the work-programme, including NGOs and labour organisations. The Greens succeeded in ensuring greater support for start-ups.

- [Webarticle](#) (EN)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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Establishment of an action programme for taxation in the EU for 2014-2020 (FISCALIS)

*(Stolojan report) - Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
Committee on the Economic and Monetary Affairs
Thurs. 21 Nov. – EP debate and vote*

MEPs adopted the Fiscalis 2020 programme on 21 November, which aims to strengthen tax administrations and cooperation across the EU. The Greens worked to ensure that the fight against tax fraud, evasion and avoidance is at the core of the programme. It will strengthen tax authorities capacities and facilitate cooperation to help them work together to tackle the problem, maximising efficiency. In particular, it will also fund IT systems to support the exchange of information between tax administrations. The Greens also ensured civil society will have a greater input into the programme, so as to be on an equal footing with business interests.

- [Webarticle](#) (EN)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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EU environment and climate change action

*Haug report
Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety
Plenary debate & vote Thursday 21st November 2013*

The LIFE programme, which supports environment and climate protection projects in the EU and policy preparation by the Commission, was adopted by the EP Thursday. The Greens would have preferred greater overall means but there was no scope to increase the budget. The group is largely happy with the priorities set. Limiting national earmarking will help ensure only the merits of the project count for financing under the programme. The group welcomes the higher co-financing rate for priority species and habitats protected under EU legislation, and also for nature and biodiversity in general.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/FR)
- [Plenary speech – Sandrine Bélier](#) (FR)
- [Plenary speech - Margrete Auken](#) (DA)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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EU budget 2014

Budgetary procedure

Plenary debate & vote Tuesday 19th November 2013

A deal on the EU's budget for 2014 was confirmed by MEPs. Under the agreement, the budget will be reduced by a historical 9% compared with 2013. Not only is this outcome devoid of ambition, it will also lead to a situation again next year, where the EU is facing budget shortfalls compared with programmed spending. This chaotic budgeting is not only bad for the credibility of the EU, it will negatively impact on beneficiaries of EU programmes in key areas like social and regional funds. For this reason, the Greens voted against the deal.

- [Latest Press Release](#) (EN/DE/FR)
- [Texts adopted](#)

Further information:

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Single seat and the right of MEPs to decide

Own Initiative Report (Green MEP Gerald Häfner & Fox report)

Committee on Constitutional Affairs

Plenary debate Tuesday 19th November 2013 - vote Wednesday 20th November 2013

Ending the European Parliament's wasteful multi-seat operation is the focus of a report, co-drafted by Green MEP Gerald Häfner, which was supported by MEPs Wednesday. The report calls for MEPs to be finally granted the right to determine the EP's location themselves and calls for the Parliament to use its power to initiate changes to the treaty to this end. It underlines the waste, cost, inefficiency and environmental impact of the multi-seat operation and highlights that this should finally be stopped.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/DE/FR)
- [Youtube video](#) (EN/DE)
- [Press Conference](#)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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Boardroom quotas for women

Legislative report (Kratsa/Regner report)

Committee on Women's Rights and Gender equality & Committee on Legal Affairs

Plenary debate Tuesday 18th November 2013 - vote Wednesday 19th November 2013

On Wednesday MEPs voted overwhelmingly to endorse draft new EU legislation obliging companies to adjust their recruitment, selection and appointment procedures to increase female representation on their boards to at least 40% by 2020 if they are below this level. The Greens have long argued for boardroom quotas, as a proven and necessary measure to increase the participation of women in higher management positions. This is a major step forward and it is now up to the Council and consequently EU governments to engage with the Parliament to finalise this legislation.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/DE)
- [Plenary speech – Marije Cornelissen](#) (NL/EN)
- [Get Women on Board](#) – Greens/EFA campaign
- [Texts adopted](#)

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Labelling Retail Investment Products

Legislative report (Berès report)

Committee on the Economic and Monetary Affairs

Vote Wednesday 20th November 2013

MEPs voted Wednesday on new legislation on key information documents for investment products (PRIIPS). The new rules would ensure compulsory information on products like structured bonds, private pension funds, insurance investment funds and corporate bonds. The EP also supported a Green proposal to create a sustainable investment label, which will help combat “Greenwashing” in the investment market.

- [Press Release](#) (EN/DE/FR)
- [Texts adopted](#)

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Implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy

(Koppa report) – Green shadow Tarja Cronberg

Committee on Foreign Affairs

Debate Wedn. 20 Nov. – Vote Thurs. 21 Nov.

The European Parliament adopted on 21 November 2013 a report on the implementation of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). This report is the most important contribution of the European Parliament to the upcoming European Council on Defence issues this December, the first Council devoted to the CSDP in the past five years.

The Greens are satisfied with the overall report. At committee level we were able to introduce three extensive paragraphs on conflict prevention, mediation and the European Civil Peace Corps. Also the ideas put forward by Koppa on CSDP institutions, procedures and instruments are in line with our position. There is also language on preventing the use of EU level funding for military CSDP. Regrettably, we lost several amendments to the conservative majority on controversial issues.

The report has the right message ahead of the December European Council of defence: Much stronger cooperation among Member States is paramount and needed in case they want to be able to act militarily within the CSDP context. But we reject the idea to use fresh money from the EU budget in order to stabilise these inefficient and risky structures. We also reject the idea to have EU defence research and an EU drone programme. This is why Greens abstained in final vote

- [Webarticle](#) (EN)
- [Text adopted](#)

Further information:

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OTHERS

- [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on Bangladesh: human rights and forthcoming elections](#)
 - [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on Qatar: situation of migrant workers](#)
 - [Greens/EFA motion for resolution on fair justice in Bolivia](#)
-

OUTSIDE THE PLENARY

UNFCCC COP19 in Warsaw

Monday 18th to Friday 22nd November 2013

The UN climate summit (COP19) in Warsaw is set to draw to a close on Friday. With two years to go to the crucial UN climate summit in Paris, at which it is hoped to conclude a global agreement, urgent progress is needed. The Greens believe the EU needs to do more: notably, moving to a 30% greenhouse gas reduction target for 2020 and adopting a 2030 reduction target of at least 50% compared to 1990 levels. If the EU delivered this, it would be a major step towards reclaiming its leadership role and help spur progress in the UN talks.

- [See our blog from Warsaw and our climate campaign site](#)

Further information:

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- [Blog ICAAT](#)

- [Animation on GMOs \(EN\)](#)

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- www.stopclimatechange.net
- <http://gmo.greens-efa.eu/gmo.greens-efa.eu>
- eat-better.greens-efa.eu

Next issue of Greens/EFA Plenary Round-up: 13 December 2013

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