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MFF

Greens/EFA position paper on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020

Why we voted against the MFF and what a Greens/EFA EU Budget would look like.

After months of negotiations the European Parliament has agreed to the European Council's demand to slash the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF). The general lines for the European Union's annual budgets from 2014-2020 have therefore been determined. The Greens/EFA group has decided not to follow the majority of the house and has rejected the final deal.

The heads of states and governments together with the conservative-socialist-liberal majority in the European Parliament have missed an important chance to effectively address the challenges Europe is facing. In order to prosper, we need to combine existing efforts on budgetary solidity with additional investment policies that can successfully stimulate sustainable development. The European Budget has an important role to play in bringing our continent back on the track of sustainable development, green economic competitiveness and social inclusion. By slashing the MFF by almost 9% in comparison to the budget freeze proposed by the European Commission, the backward-looking alliance in Council and Parliament has made a future oriented investment policy impossible.

The agreed MFF perpetuates the backward-looking priorities and content of past EU budgets. The new MFF again falls short on delivering the necessary investments in research and innovation, education, youth, sustainable infrastructure and development aid. The same heads of states and governments that announce to the media that education and research are the strategic priority of the EU 2020 Strategy, now refuse to grant it the necessary financial resources.

The deficiencies of the past budgets are all too obvious and it is all the more shocking that the heads of state and government, together with the Parliament's conservative-socialist-liberal majority, decided to repeat them. For example, the Common Agricultural Policy which makes up a large part of the overall budget, continues to subsidize the agro-industrial giants on a large scale and still lacks effective, compulsory ecological standards.

Furthermore, the new MFF shows worrying signs of re-nationalization. Too often the common European interest has been set aside when member states were negotiating exclusively for their own advantages and aimed at cheap populist victories with the national press. With the Territorial Cooperation Objective

within the cohesion policy being cut by over 35 %, the new MFF will reduce trans-national, trans-regional and trans-border cooperation dramatically. At a time when Europe needs to come closer together in order to overcome the crisis these cuts are a step in the wrong direction.

We strongly criticize the majority of parliamentarians for giving in too quickly to member states' demands. Willingly they have dropped the ambitious initial position of the European Parliament. The claims made in the parliamentary resolutions, voted with an overwhelming majority, were abandoned at the first sign of Council opposition. The few concessions made by the Council are modest.

We continue to demand a sustainable revision of the MFF by the newly elected Parliament and will not stop fighting for a modern, ecological and future oriented EU budget directly financed by own resources.

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