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Strasbourg Flash - MFF special

Greens/EFA preview on the future EU budget and funding programmes for the November plenary 2013

With the European Parliament to vote on the EU multiannual financial framework 2014-20, as well as a series of votes on EU funding programmes for the budgetary period, this preview provides an overview from a Green perspective. Click for a [printable-layouted version](#) (pdf)

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MFF: EU budget off on the wrong foot

Tues. 19 Nov. – EP debate and vote (Dehaene, Kalfin and Trzaskowski reports)

The final agreement on the EU's multiannual financial framework (2014-20) is set to be confirmed by MEPs. The final outcome includes largely meaningless compromises on the key outstanding issues. The proposals on own resources, a review clause and budgetary flexibility are aspirational and stand almost no chance of being respected. This is no 'compensation' for the Parliament accepting the massively scaled-down ambition of the overall MFF and the Green group regrets that MEPs are set to roll over and accept this bad outcome for Europe. (see [latest press release](#))

- Multiannual financial framework 2014-2020 (Dehaene and Kalfin reports): Green shadow Helga Trüpel
 - Interinstitutional agreement on cooperation in budgetary matters and on sound financial management (Trzaskowski report): Green shadow Gerald Häfner
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Funding EU energy and transport systems

Mon. 18 Nov. – EP debate; vote Tues.

EU funds for key energy and transport infrastructure projects are set to be voted on by MEPs. 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.

- Connecting Europe Facility (Valean, Riquet, Ayala-Sender report): Green shadows Michael Cramer (transport) and Claude Turmes (energy)
 - Trans-European transport network: Green shadows Michael Cramer and Eva Lichtenberger
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Promoting a European education: Erasmus

Mon. 18 Nov. - EP debate; vote Tues.

Following a funding crisis earlier this year, the plenary will this week vote on the new Erasmus+ programme supporting education, training, youth and sport for 2014-2020. Greens succeeded in obtaining a 40% budget increase, increasing the number of grants available. Over five million Europeans stand to benefit from this scheme which enables young people to study or volunteer in a different EU member state than their own.

- Erasmus for all programme (Pack report): Green shadow Malika Benarab-Attou
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Citizens for Europe

Mon. 18 Nov. - EP debate; vote Tues.

This programme is 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.

- Europe for Citizens programme (Takkula report): Green shadow Helga Trüpel
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EU nuclear energy spending

Tues. 19 Nov. - EP vote (Skinner, Kraemer, Chichester reports)

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, with €1.8bn earmarked for nuclear research 2014-2018. The Greens believe it is high time to change legal basis, with a view to ensuring the EP has a say as a co-decider on nuclear funds.

- 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
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ITER: the nuclear fusion cash cow

Tues. 19 Nov. – EP vote (Remek report)

The disproportionate contribution towards the ITER nuclear fusion project from the EU budget is set to continue. Apart from the fact that Europe contributes far more public funds than other international partners 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.

- Supplementary research programme for the ITER project 2014-18 (Remek report): Green shadow Michèle Rivasi
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Rules on EU spending to crisis-hit countries

Tues. 19 Nov. – EP debate; vote Weds.

New rules governing how EU structural and investment funds are disbursed are set to be confirmed by MEPs. 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. The Greens are pushing for this provision to be overturned. (see [latest press release](#))

- Common provisions on European funds (Van Nistelrooij, Krehl report): Green shadow Elisabeth Schroedter
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Social funding during the crisis

Tues. 19 Nov. - EP debate; vote Weds.

MEPs are set to confirm the European Social Fund 2014-20, a crucial EU programme in the context of the crisis. The Greens helped ensure that measures to reduce poverty and tackle youth unemployment will get greater priority. The ESF will also have a greater focus on poverty reduction measures, both in terms of funding (20% of the fund) and in terms of content. In the future, the ESF will be able to support projects that tackle the root causes of poverty and not simply projects aimed at labour market participation, helping children and the elderly, as well as refugees and asylum seekers.

- European Social Fund (Morin-Chartier report): Green shadow Elisabeth Schroedter

Supporting cohesion and our regions

Tues. 19 Nov. - EP debate; vote Weds.

MEPs are set to approve the next funding period on cohesion and regional policy. The Greens are calling for a number of policy changes, including greater protection of rights of people with disabilities, no funding for decommissioning or 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. The Greens also want a shift of funding priorities towards green spending and more funding for adapting to climate change.

- European Regional Development Fund and the 'investment for growth and jobs' goal (Olbrycht report): Green shadow Karima Delli
 - European Regional Development Fund and the 'European territorial cooperation' goal: Green shadow François Alfonsi
 - Cohesion Fund (Bostinaru report): Green shadow Nikos Chrysogelos
 - European grouping of territorial cooperation (Zeller report): Green shadow Catherine Grèze
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Missed chance for agriculture policy reform

Weds. 20 Nov. – EP debate and vote

The long-awaited revision of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy is set to be confirmed by MEPs. The Greens believe we have missed an opportunity for truly reforming the CAP. Key provisions to cap or limit problematic direct payments to farmers have been hollowed out. This is compounded by provisions to allow the diversion funds aimed at supporting more sustainable farming to direct payments. The final outcome could also allow 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. (see [latest press release](#))

- Financing, management and monitoring of the CAP (La Via report): Green shadow Bas Eickhout
 - European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (Capoulas Santos): Greens/EFA shadow Alyn Smith
 - Common organisation of the markets in agricultural products (Dantin report): Green shadow José Bové
 - Direct payments to farmers under support schemes within the framework of the CAP (Capoulas Santos report): Green shadow Martin Häusling
 - Transitional provisions on support for rural development (Dess report): Green shadow Martin Häusling
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Horizon 2020: research and innovation spending

Weds. 20 Nov. – EP debate; vote Thurs.

Crucial EU funding programmes for research and innovation from 2014-20 will be voted. 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. Importantly, there will be a transparent and inclusive approach to public-private partnerships. The low proportion of funds foreseen for this crucial future-oriented area of spending under the future EU budgetary framework casts a shadow however.

- Horizon 2020 - framework programme for research and innovation (Riera Madurell report): Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
 - Rules for the participation and dissemination in Horizon 2020 (Ehler report): Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
 - Specific programme implementing Horizon 2020 (Carvalho report): Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
 - Strategic innovation agenda of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (Matias report): Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
 - European Institute of Innovation and Technology (**Lamberts** report)
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Enterprise and support for small businesses

Weds. 20 Nov. – EP debate; vote Thurs.

MEPs will endorse the COSME programme, which aims to strengthen the competitiveness of EU enterprises, particularly SMEs. The new programme will help strengthen 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 group also succeeded in ensuring greater support for start-ups and including crowd funding as an innovative financial instrument.

- Competitiveness of enterprises and small and medium-sized enterprises (Creutzmann report): Green shadow Reinhard Bütikofer
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Taking action on tax evasion

Thurs. 21 Nov. – EP debate and vote

The Fiscalis 2020 programme, which aims to strengthen tax administrations and cooperation across the EU, will be adopted by MEPs. 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.

- Establishment of an action programme for taxation in the EU for 2014-2020 (FISCALIS) (Stolojan report): Green shadow Philippe Lamberts
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EU environment and climate change action

Thurs. 21 Nov. – EP debate and vote

The LIFE programme, which supports environment and climate protection projects in the EU and policy preparation by the Commission, will be adopted by the EP. 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.

- Programme for the Environment and Climate Action (LIFE) (Haug report): Green shadow Sandrine

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