Press release | 11.11.2015

European election law

Missed opportunity for constructive reform

The European Parliament today voted on proposals to reform EU rules governing European elections. After the vote, Greens/EFA vice-president **Josep Maria Terricabras** said:

"MEPs have today missed an opportunity to constructively reform EU electoral law. With citizens' engagement in the EU political process flagging, we should be looking at ways to encourage a maximum of the electorate to get involved and trying to ensure a truly European approach to the European Parliament elections. Instead, a majority of MEPs has voted with national blinkers on and opposed progressive reforms.

"The proposal to introduce an obligatory threshold in European elections is at odds with the principle of proportionality set out in EU law. Thresholds necessarily undermine the representation of smaller parties and negatively impact on political pluralism, which is a foundation of the European Parliament. While this provision would initially only apply to large constituencies, it is a worrying precedent.

"The failure to send a clear message on transnational lists in European elections is seriously disappointing. For years, there have been efforts to give the elections a truly European context, with a view to encouraging voters to look beyond narrow national issues and make decisions on a more European basis. Our group has long supported transnational lists and believes the failure to give clear support to the designation of a small proportion of seats for European lists is an opportunity lost. Instead, MEPs have passed the buck to EU governments to decide by unanimity. It takes away from the welcome proposal to formalise the leading candidate or 'spitzenkandidat' process in European electoral.

"MEPs also blocked provisions aimed at greater gender equality in European elections via 'zipped' electoral lists or other measures. Instead, MEPs only voted to support a vague recommendation that electoral lists should try to ensure gender equality."

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Responsible MEPs



Josep Maria Terricabras

EFA President and first Vice President of the Greens/EFA Group

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