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MFF/EU budget votes

EP president Schulz undermines democratic process and role of EP

The Greens/EFA group has hit out at a decision to prevent MEPs voting on any amendments in the context of this week's votes in the European Parliament on the EU's multiannual financial framework and the various multiannual funding programmes for 2014-20. Following a unilateral procedural decision by EP president Schulz, which was merely presented as a fait-accompli to the leaders of political groups last week, MEPs will have no possibility to vote on amendments to these crucial files for the EU's future budgetary framework (1). An attempt by the Greens/EFA, ALDE and GUE/NGL groups to get president Schulz to reverse this decision at the start of today's plenary was unsuccessful. Commenting on this decision and its implications, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** stated:

“The decision by EP president Schulz to prevent MEPs from voting on any amendments during these crucial votes for the future EU budgetary period undermines the democratic process. The multiannual financial framework and multiannual funding programmes are of fundamental importance to how the EU will function over the coming years. Preventing MEPs from having any scope to influence or address issues with these programmes in the European Parliament's final vote totally undermines the role of the parliament as a co-decider on the files. The Greens regret that president Schulz has prevented due democratic process on these crucial votes.”

The Greens/EFA group is particularly concerned about a key provision under new rules governing how EU structural and investment funds are disbursed - the 'common provisions regulation'. The so-called macroeconomic conditionality would allow the Commission to propose suspending EU funds for regions in member states under excessive deficit procedures under the Stability and Growth Pact. The Greens had been seeking to have this provision removed and were urging MEPs from other groups to support this move. However, it is now unlikely that there will even be a vote on this crucial amendment. Commenting on the issue, Green regional affairs spokesperson **Elisabeth Schroedter** said:

“This wrongheaded proposal on macroeconomic conditionality flies in the face of good policy-making. Suspending EU funds for regions in member states under excessive deficit procedures implies a double sanction of countries already in economic difficulty. This pro-cyclical measure is exactly the opposite of what the EU should be doing to help ensure solidarity and assist EU member states and regions in difficult economic situations. It is nothing short of a scandal that MEPs will likely not have the opportunity to vote on our amendment to remove this macroeconomic conditionality from the common provisions regulation.”

(1) MEPs will vote on the consolidated compromise texts first. If these are adopted, none of the table

amendments will be voted.

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Rebecca Harms

Member

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