Press release | 12.02.2015

# Tax evasion/Luxembourg leaks

## EP special committee must ensure meaningful investigation with proper follow-up

The European Parliament today voted to approve the creation of a special committee to investigate tax evasion and dumping in Europe following the Luxembourg Leaks revelations. The Greens/EFA group had been pushing for the creation of an inquiry committee, which was blocked by the bigger political groups (EPP, S&D, ECR and ALDE), but without this effort, the EP would have had no standing investigation. The special committee will operate on the mandate proposed by the Greens/EFA group as the basis for an inquiry committee. Commenting after the vote, Greens/EFA co-president **Philippe Lamberts** said:

*"After months of obstruction by EU Parliament president Schulz and the leaders of the EP's bigger political groups, we are happy there will at least now be a standing investigation into the serious issues that have been brought into the spotlight by Luxembourg Leaks. While it is unfortunate that the parliament will not be using its most powerful investigative instrument, a special committee is a second best option. It is clear that without the pressure of our group, there would have been no serious investigation, as the bigger political groups wanted to wash their hands of the issue. We will now work constructively within this committee to ensure it properly investigates tax dumping and evasion in Europe, with a view to preparing a proper legislative follow-up at EU level and we sincerely hope the other political groups will do the same."*

Greens/EFA economic and finance spokesperson **Sven Giegold** said:

*"We will make sure that the special committee aggressively investigates those who are behind and have profited from aggressive tax practices in Europe. Citizens have a right to know how corporations have avoided their tax responsibility with the complicity of EU governments. After trying every trick in the book to block an inquiry committee, the bigger political groups must now cease their obstruction and allow this committee to properly investigate tax dumping in Europe. To be effective, this committee will have to have access to key documents from member states, as well as the prerogative to call high-ranking witnesses, including board members of big corporations and current or former implicated finance ministers. The support of all political groups will be vital to this end. Ensuring a proper response to the revelations on tax avoidance and dumping is crucial to the credibility of the EU. We will now keep an open mind but, if the special committee cannot ensure a proper investigation, we will renew our push for a full-blown inquiry."*

The special committee will be composed of 45 MEPs and will have an initial time-frame of 6 months, which could be extended. The mandate of the committee is the same as the mandate proposed by the

Greens/EFA group for the inquiry committee, with a view to investigating cases of breaches or poor application of EU law with regard to taxation.

The Greens/EFA group will have three full members - Sven Giegold, Eva Joly and Philippe Lamberts - and three substitute members - Ernest Maragall, Molly Scott Cato and Ernest Urtasun.

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