



Strengthening democratic scrutiny over EU external instruments

[DICO] Séance plénière

Parliament approved proposals on Thursday to give MEPs a power of scrutiny over how the European Commission finances projects intended to promote stability in non-EU countries, improve cooperation with developing and other countries and promote democracy and human rights.

With the Lisbon Treaty in force, Parliament decides jointly with the Council on almost all new laws and this joint approach also needs to be reflected in democratic oversight of the implementation of external cooperation financing instruments.

Strategy papers for geographic and thematic programmes, as well as multiannual indicative programmes drafted by the Commission for the external co-operation instruments "shall be adopted by means of delegated acts", say amendments approved by the Foreign Affairs, Development and International Trade committees. This would give the European Parliament a de facto veto, by enabling it to block these strategy papers and multiannual programmes and require the Commission to present amended proposals.

All five reports were adopted at first reading without any agreement having been reached with the Council and Commission on the most contentious issue, relating to the application of delegated acts. However, during the debate on Wednesday, all three institutions underlined their intention to engage in trilogue negotiations in order to ensure that these financial instruments function properly.

Reports and rapporteurs

Instrument for Stability drafted by Franziska Brantner (Greens/EFA, DE) - 567 votes in favour, 41 against and 6 abstentions.

Financing instrument for development cooperation drafted by Gay Mitchell (EPP, IE) - 583 votes in favour, 6 against, and 19 abstentions

Financing instrument for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide drafted by Barbara Lochbihler (Greens/EFA, DE) and Kinga Gal (EPP, HU) - 577 votes in favour, 17 against and 18 abstentions

Financing instrument for cooperation with industrialised countries drafted by Helmut Scholz (GUE/NGL, DE) - 586 votes in favour, 27 against, and 10 abstentions

Financing instrument for development cooperation drafted by Charles Goerens (ALDE, LU) - 574 votes in favour, 17 against and 25 abstentions

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