

**Question for written answer E-006112/2012
to the Council**

Rule 117

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Subject: Cross-cutting issues in negotiations with Parliament on the MFF and Structural Funds regulations

On 21 May 2012, the Danish Presidency established a 'negotiating box' on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2014-2020 (MFF). The negotiation box contains essential elements that have to be decided according to the ordinary legislative procedure (Article 177 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU)). This applies especially to matters pertaining to cohesion policy.

Article 312(3) TFEU states that 'the financial framework shall determine the amounts of the annual ceilings on commitment appropriations by category of expenditure and of the annual ceiling on payment appropriations. The categories of expenditure, limited in number, shall correspond to the Union's major sectors of activity.' The same article also states that 'the financial framework shall lay down any other provisions required for the annual budgetary procedure to run smoothly'.

1. Could the Council state its interpretation of the words 'any other provisions required for the annual budgetary procedure for the annual budgetary procedure to run smoothly' in Article 312(3) TFEU?
2. Is the Council of the opinion that the negotiation box on the MFF 2014-2020 contains a number of specific parts that are covered by the ordinary legislative procedure, as specified in Article 177 TFEU?
3. Does the mix of MFF (consent procedure) and cohesion policy (ordinary legislative procedure) matters mean that the whole of the MFF will be negotiated in accordance with the ordinary legislative procedure?
4. How does the Council envisage the progress of negotiations with Parliament on the proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down common provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund covered by the Common Strategic Framework and laying down general provisions on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Cohesion Fund, given that some of the issues raised in this general regulation, which is covered by the ordinary legislative procedure, are also included in the MFF negotiation box, which is covered by the consent procedure?