**Annex I**

**RESEARCH IMPLEMENTATION REPORT**

**Empirical data sources**

The data originate from semi-structured interviews. We applied positional criteria to sample interviewees. Non-probabilistic sampling is the most appropriate approach to elite interviewing since it includes the most important players who participated in the events under investigation (Tansey 2007). This sampling method permits the collection of first-hand information from a complete set of relevant actors. These comprise the MEPs that intervened in the negotiation of the RRF, plus MEPs involved in parts of the budgetary package and those with responsibility on budgetary matters.

This generated a total constellation of **38 MEPs.** We also added EU Commission officers taking part in the negotiation (i.e. additional 11 persons) to construct the universe of actors. Although we contacted most of the MEPs, we could finally interview 12 MEPs.. We conducted 13 **semi-structured interviews** with 14 people; see the List of Interviews in Annex.

Overall, we consider our sample (i.e. 12 out of 38 MEPs plus 2 out of 10 EU Commission officers) to be highly representative since it covers **31.57%** of the population of EP negotiators. We deliberately asked our interviewees to focus on EP´s objectives and priorities during the negotiations of the RR. MEPs interviewees belong to different groups of the EP, among them: 1 interviewee of S&D, 3 interviewees of EPP, 3 interviewees of Renew, 3 interviewees of Greens/EFA, 1 interviewee of ECR, 1 interviewee of ID.

**Interviews**

We used semi-structured interviews with a basic questionnaire. Semi-structured interviews '*shed light on the hidden elements of political action that are not clear from an analysis of political outcomes or other primary sources*' (Tansey 2007, 767). Beyond the original questions, interviewees could express their own views freely, which diminished the scope for the interviewer to manipulate the data by imposing interpretative schemes when asking questions. As a consequence, we expanded and/or complemented standard questions during the interview process in some cases. Interviewees were also free to provide or refrain from providing arguments supporting any or none of the conditions informing the research, as well as to put forth alternative explanations. The claims made by the actors allowed us to verify whether the actors' actions and statements at each stage of the causal process are consistent with the expectations implied by the theory. In practical terms, the key question that informed the interviews was 'Why did the EP obtained limited gains in terms of accountability and scrutiny capacities in the RRF, but instead it extracted important policy concessions?'. Due to pandemic circumstances, we conducted 12 interviews through Skype between date 28th January 2021 and 18th March 2021. One of the interviewees sent a written contribution, due to their availability problems to appoint a Skype meeting.

**Coding**

We analysed the interview transcripts using Atlas.ti©. We generated deductive codes from the conditions underlying the paper's causal argument. The initial reading of

the transcripts inductively generated further codes, following canonical coding practice (Campbell et al. 2013). Overall, we generated a list of **83 codes**, which composed the codebook. We clustered codes in 11 groups. A first set of these groups resulted from the deductive construction of the different strategies to explain the outcome (i.e. rhetoric appeal to democracy; veto threat; issue linkage; timing; intergroup consensus; relations with the Commission). We also created inductively some additional groups of codes with explanatory value and not deriving from theorization (i.e. future governance; position of the Council) and also codes that helped to better define the outcome (i.e. EP preferences; satisfaction with the final outcome; EP conduct of negotiations). The code book (Annex III) contains 11 groups, each disaggregated in more specific levels. Each code has a minimum of 2 levels and there is a maximum of 5 levels for a code. In total, we extracted 546 quotations (Annex IV). Annex V presents the distribution of the frequencies of each code.

## Data protection

After coding the interviews, we asked the interviewees via email for their consent to both publish their names and publish the output of their interviews (document with their quotes originated by Atlas.ti©). Most interviewees responded affirmatively to both requests. However, some exceptions must be pointed out. Firstly, Commission Officers refused to be cited in the paper and their outcome to be published, hence their identity cannot be revealed. Instead, they appear in the paper as "Commission officers". Secondly, one of the MEPs (Jan Olbrycht) agreed to be cited in the paper by its name, although did not give his consent for his quotes to be published. Finally, two MEPs (Unidentified Greens/EFA MEP of and Unidentified EPP MEP) did not gave their permission for being named, although they gave it for their quotes to be published.

## Causal inference

We seek to respond to the questions: (I) to what extent (if any) the EP increased its powers or influence during the RRF negotiations? (II) Why did the EP fail to acquire all the powers and influence it demanded? Using as primary evidence MEPs interviews to respond them, we assume that we can infer certainty when firstly, actors explicitly identify the presence of any of the theoretical components (e.g. strategies) and, secondly, a sufficient number of interviewees coincide in their interpretations. In order to validate any theoretical component, we establish a validity threshold: at least three actors must coincide on a given explanatory factor while no actor should refute or deny that factor. We are aware that the robustness of this inference could be questioned by assuming that the actors could be lying. However, refutation on the basis of this assumption would need to be empirically established.

## Other sources of empirical information

We also compiled 63 press releases issued by the EP (included in the Annex VI) regarding the negotiations of the MFF-RRF throughout the year 2020 (up until November 30). Additionally, we complement these documents with parliamentary resolutions concerning the MFF-RRF (approved between 2018 and 2020) and with statements from key MEPs involved in the negotiations that are included in press documents or open letters. Given that EP opted for carrying out a very public negotiation, communicating its demands in several public documents, these documents constitute a reliable source

to identify the position of the EP, the arguments it uses and the strategies it implements. Moreover, they allow us to observe how the negotiations evolved over time.

## Reference

Tansey, Oisín. 2007. "Process Tracing and elite interviewing: a case for non- Probability Sampling*." Political Science & Politics* 40(4): 765–72.