

# Strengthening the European values with the new MFF

*These recommendations as developed by some of our campaign partners below aim at strengthening European values in the next MFF.*

## 1. Supporting the rule of law

Introduce regular assessments of the operation of the rule of law in all MSs by an independent body.

Based on the findings, develop a traffic light system with the possible responses from the European Commission:



If the rule of law is fully respected, provide incentives (rewards) to the MSs. They can take the form of reduced co-financing rate of certain programmes, or the provision of extra funds from a set aside reserve.



If there are some breaches of the rule of law, a targeted ex ante conditionality should be introduced in the Member State concerned.



If serious breaches are identified, some EU funds should be suspended. Some funds could be still disbursed to vulnerable groups of beneficiaries, and a portion of uncommitted funds could be diverted to the civil society and other state and non-state actors through independent beneficiaries with the primary objective to restate the rule of law and strengthen democracy.

## 2. Increasing support for advancing European values

Create a separate funding instrument in the next MFF specifically for democracy and enhancing civil space. Such a new fund should be administered by a body working independently from the EC and the MSs, and it should build on the ample experiences of the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights targeting non-EU countries, and the EEA grants for civil society in Europe.

Such a future instrument should aim to maintain and uphold European values in all Member States and also flexibly react on favourable trends, thus it should be both preventive and reactive in its release.

Support should also help to improve the EU literacy of European citizens, making them more familiar with how the EU works (national and EU competences, EU decision making process, the role of common policies, European values, etc.). Being well informed about the functioning of the EU is a precondition to exercise their democratic rights as European

citizens in European and national elections and referenda. Brexit has also showed the dangers of low EU literacy that can be misused for political objectives.

Such a future European fund should also include a separate litigation fund for NGOs with the aim to maintain the rule of law and European values in all MSs in partnership with civil society.