



People's
Budget



CEE Bankwatch
Network



To: Mr Nicolas Hulot
Minister for the Ecological and Inclusive Transition
France

23 November 2017

Re: Asking for your commitment to sustainability proof the future EU Budget

Dear Minister,

Europe faces multiple challenges, which need to be responded to by means of EU policies and financial rules alike. Even though the EU budget has changed a lot in the last decades, it still requires ambitious reform to realise its full potential to become a driver of sustainable change and to help meet the expectations of the people for an ambitious future for Europe.

The experiences of our national partners demonstrate that we are still far away from an EU budget that is sustainable or works for citizens. EU funds are still being used to fund unsustainable projects, like fossil fuel investments, or projects exacerbating inequality and social exclusion for instance through agricultural payments.

Real progress can only be achieved through a holistic approach, where incoherencies and contradictions are resolved, and all policies and programs contribute better to the sustainable development agenda. **We ask for your political support to ensure policy coherence in the future EU budget through sustainability proofing.** This should be based on the consistent application of an inseparable set of [sustainability principles](#) in line with the ambitious implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Introducing sustainability proofing to the EU budget requires new mechanisms through the effective application of substantive, procedural and institutional instruments. They should maximise the social, environmental and economic benefits, while avoiding, or at least minimizing harmful impacts and trade-offs of EU spending and lending.

Sustainability proofing must be also a central element of a results and performance oriented budget, where the results of all spending and lending are assessed against a coherent set of sustainability principles and indicators, and made easily transparent to investors and citizens. This can help steer future investment priorities and ensure that citizens understand how the EU budget benefits them and the future of their children. As part of making such a transformational budget possible, the European Commission must propose methodologies to track and assess the impact of *all* EU spending and lending on sustainable development.

A broad civil society campaign comprising European platforms and sustainable cities networks have come together under the **People's Budget campaign** to help to make it happen. More than 60 European organisations from social, environmental, development and other sectors within [SDG Watch Europe](#) have been calling European Commissioners and Members of the European Parliament to sustainability proof the next MFF in the last months. Within our campaign we bring together decision makers, stakeholders and the necessary expertise to further elaborate instruments for sustainability proofing.

We, the coordinators of the European People's budget campaign call for your political support to this work. Your support is indispensable within the Council for meaningful EU budget reform, which can ensure that EU money is not wasted on contradictory objectives, where the same budget currently supports the mitigation of climate change and fossil fuel investments at the same time. To prevent that the objectives on social inclusion are compromised in environmental spending, or the contrary, social objectives are served through environmentally harmful infrastructures. To ensure that the use of EU money is transparent, reduce the risk of corruption in EU funds across Member States, and that civil society is provided with genuine means to participate in decisions about EU spending.

This is a common European cause, which can be only realised with the commitment from all Member States. Therefore we ask for your political support to introduce sustainability proofing for the next MFF. We hope that your commitment to a sustainability proofed EU budget will lead to a budget that citizens can both understand and believe in.

We would be keen to provide you with further information on our views how the next MFF should be improved to make all EU budget lines 'sustainability proof.'

We also kindly ask that you raise this issue with your colleagues responsible for the negotiations about the future EU budget within the government and towards the European Commission.

Yours faithfully,



Erzsébet Gergely
General Secretary
CEEweb for Biodiversity



Petr Hlobil
Director
CEE Bankwatch Network

On behalf of the People's Budget Campaign under the auspices of SDG Watch Europe, an EU level, cross-sectoral CSO alliance of 78 full members and observers from development, environment, social, human rights and other sectors

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