

## **PRESS RELEASE: Commission pitch for Europe's future funding must be a People's Budget**

Brussels — In advance of Wednesday's release by the European Commission of a reflection paper on the future of Europe's finances, a growing movement of civil society across Europe has launched its own call for a reformed EU budget that unlocks a positive, people-centered and sustainable future for a new Europe.

Coinciding with the publication of the Commission's reflection paper, the People's Budget [1] campaign calls for a rethink of the EU budget [2] to guide a sixth scenario for Europe, and demands that citizens and civil society be allowed into the Future of Europe debate, which is currently happening behind closed doors.

The launch of People's Budget provides input [3] to the last piece of President Juncker's White Paper on the Future of Europe [4], which should provide a first look at the possible financing arrangements for the five scenarios outlined by the Commission in March for the future of the European Union.

With none of the five scenarios from the Commission's March White Paper addressing citizens or the root problems facing Europe, more than 250 organisations released a sixth scenario [5] last week, endorsed by the People's Budget, to outline a Europe based on principles of democratic participation, reversing inequalities, and placing sustainable well-being at the very heart of the European project.

For **CEE Bankwatch Network**, David Holyoake said, "The EU budget is a sort of mirror of the European project, what and who it values and ignores. Around 11 per cent of Europeans are affected by energy poverty, and the EU budget does very little about it. An innovative EU budget would mean a greater number of ordinary households and communities can access finance for priorities such as the clean energy transformation. Through genuinely involving citizens in EU spending towards a brighter future, the Commission has golden opportunities to rebuild common dreams and a sense of ownership in the EU project."

For **SDG Watch Europe and Friends of the Earth Europe**, Leida Rijnhout, said: "The European Union needs a bold vision for the future that puts social and environmental wellbeing at the core – and it needs a budget to match. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development should be absolutely key for a future that serves people and the planet, not vested interests. After the European Commission's lacklustre five scenarios, more than 250 organisations from across Europe are backing a sixth scenario of a Europe which stands for peace, justice, long term sustainability, and wellbeing for all."

Klara Hajdu of **CEEweb for Biodiversity** said: "Meaningful reform of the EU budget reform is not easy and involves more than simply throwing money at the causes of poverty and climate change. We need a new approach, based on a set of sustainability principles [6], that ensures all EU spending and lending delivers tangible benefits for people and improves or does not

harm the environment. We need the right tools for this and so we call for sustainability proofing the future budget in a stepwise process with a clearly defined methodology.”

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Notes

[1] [www.PeoplesBudget.eu](http://www.PeoplesBudget.eu) a full recording of today’s launch briefing can be found online at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvMnVU\\_wcq8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EvMnVU_wcq8)

[2] An integral component of the reflection paper will be the EU’s long-term budget – also known as the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) – which defines the EU’s spending priorities over a seven-year period. Preparations for the next MFF beyond 2020 are underway, with a proposal for the next MFF expected before the end of 2017.

[3] See more information about our vision for a reformed budget with illustrative examples and some key policy asks from campaign partners <http://www.peoplesbudget.eu/wp/wp-content/uploads/Sustainability-principles-explained.docx>

[4] More information about the Future of Europe process if available at [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/white-paper-future-europe/white-paper-future-europe-five-scenarios\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/white-paper-future-europe/white-paper-future-europe-five-scenarios_en)

[5] More information is available here: <http://www.foeeurope.org/Over-250-NGOs-launch-alternative-vision-Europe-200617>

[6] Sustainability principles for the future EU budget endorsed by SDG Watch Europe: [https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/09175c\\_4ebc89cfca2444e7953c576dfc393fa5.pdf](https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/09175c_4ebc89cfca2444e7953c576dfc393fa5.pdf)