

OVERARCHING NEGOTIATION GUIDE ON THE FUTURE EU BUDGET



for national partners

Next steps in the EU discussion on the future of MFF
(Multiannual Financial Framework for the annual EU budgets)
and suggestions for action to make it sustainability proof and
serve the Sustainable Development Goals



14-15 December	First conclusions on the future of Europe at the European Council
January	Start of the Bulgarian Presidency Online EU consultation on the MFF
January-March	Own initiative report on the MFF discussed in the European Parliament
23 February	Informal Council meeting on the priorities of the next MFF
May-July	Legislative proposal on the next MFF (narrative and headings/figures) and related legislative proposals on all budget lines (about 70 pieces)
June	Start of the Austrian Presidency
July	Start of official negotiations among Member States and in the European Parliament

Prepare your arguments

Participate in the online consultation

Voice your opinion in the future of Europe debate

Ask for a meeting with the ministry in charge of the MFF negotiations on EU level

Find out:

- What are the national priorities for the next MFF?



1. Prepare your arguments

First of all, your objective will be to be **guaranteed involvement** at every stage of the MFF negotiations.

Second of all, you will already start insisting that **sustainability proofing** becomes an overarching methodological framework in the negotiations about the MFF, which is also able to ensure that **your own sectoral policy asks** are accommodated in the future budget.

You should argue that the EU's commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, obliges the EU and its Member States to integrate it into all its decisions, such as the EU budget. You should make the link among these governmental commitments, and what European civil society calls for: the 6th scenario for the future of Europe and sustainability proofing of the future EU budget by the People's Budget campaign. Finally you should integrate your own sectoral asks into the bigger picture and demonstrate the tangible benefits they can bring to the people and the planet.

1.1 European civil society developed its **6th scenario** as a contribution to the debate about the future of Europe launched by President Juncker in March 2017. It outlines how sustainability should be put at the heart of the future European cooperation. It also provides with a solid base on how the EU budget should look like by 2030:

The EU Budget lives up to its potential to catalyse sustainability, economic justice and wellbeing, to maintain and restore our natural resources and biodiversity. It includes participatory spending tools as well as strong accountability mechanisms. In other words, there will be a budget for the people.

A new definition for economic progress in the EU is published regularly which goes beyond reliance on GDP and guides and measures impact of spending on the sustainable wellbeing of all citizens and their environment. All spending lines are fully sustainability proofed, resulting

in more targeted spending, and greater linking of resources with performance of Member States and regions in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. <http://www.foeeurope.org/6thscenario>

1.2 SDG Watch Europe has been calling for **sustainability proofing** the future EU budget based on **8 sustainability principles**.

Why? Because:

- ✓ spending on contradictory objectives (like investing in fossil fuel infrastructure and climate change mitigation at the same time) is merely wasting money,
- ✓ sustainability proofing helps to meet the biggest European challenges through delivering lasting results,
- ✓ it helps the EU reconnect with its citizens through increased transparency and stronger contribution in improving people's wellbeing,
- ✓ it improves coherence, effectiveness and efficiency in the future EU spending and lending in line with the EU level priority of better regulation,
- ✓ similar conclusions and recommendations have been drawn by the EU High-Level Expert Group on Sustainable Finance, which calls for introducing a "sustainability test" of all future EU financial regulations and policies, and because
- ✓ more than 60 European civil society platforms from various sectors, as well as national groups call for it with a common voice in the People's Budget campaign.

How? Sustainability proofing can be ensured through:

- ✓ Substantive instruments, such as setting the right funding objectives, ex ante conditionalities, criteria for EU value added for making decisions about what to spend EU money on, earmarking money for specific objectives,
- ✓ Procedural instruments, such as impact assessments, which take multiscale social and environmental impacts duly into account,
- ✓ Institutional instruments, like expanding the role of the European Court of Auditors or national monitoring committees to consider sustainability aspects,
- ✓ applying these instruments in a stepwise process, where the social, environmental and economic aspects are considered in a balanced way, and priority is placed on the avoidance of negative impacts.

What can it deliver?

- ✓ Sustainability proofing is a tool applied for the MFF to ensure that environmental integrity is maintained as a precondition for any development, while economic and social development serve the objective of increasing human well-being.

1.3 The European People's Budget campaign was launched in June and formulates the following **key asks** for the next MFF in line with the adopted **sustainability principles**:

- 1 The EU budget should serve the Sustainable Development Goals both inside and outside Europe and be fully in line with the **Paris Agreement** on climate change and the **Charter of Fundamental Rights** as well as international human rights standards, 
- 2 The **European Semester** should be transformed to deliver "Annual Sustainable Development Surveys" and help to channel EU funding to the identified priority areas, 
- 3 EU funding decisions made upon the **EU value added** and the measurement of **results** should be coherent and balanced among all three dimensions of sustainable development at the same time as enshrined in the Treaty, 
- 4 The EU budget should strengthen **common European values** in Europe and globally, 
- 5 The EU budget should **work for the people and with the people**, with greater transparency and meaningful participation of the citizens, 
- 6 The EU budget should **increase social inclusion** and provide financial means to implement the European Pillar of Social Rights, 
- 7 EU funding should be catalytic in the **transition to circular economy**, and prevent any wasteful spending for unsustainable infrastructures like investment in fossil fuels and environmentally harmful practices, 
- 8 The EU budget should support the **transition to sustainable food and land policy**, and restore and maintain ecosystem services and conserve biodiversity in Europe. 

[Sustainability principles endorsed by SDG Watch Europe](#)

1.4 In case you prepare a more detailed position, it could be summarised in a similar table:

<p>Formulate your policy demand as specifically as possible</p>	<p>Formulate your policy demand as specifically as possible</p>	<p>For instance: Agricultural spending should not degrade biodiversity and should contribute to restoring and maintaining ecosystem services</p>
<p>Links to the sustainability principle -key policy demand</p>	<p>Make the link to the European level demands and sustainability principles (your policy demand should never contradict any of the sustainability principles)</p>	<p>For instance: Public spending should deliver (only) public goods EU money should not be used to degrade the environment and ecosystem services</p>
<p>Justification in terms of bad examples from the current MFF</p>	<p>You can use the list of bad examples from the annex or collect your own</p>	<p>For instance: Currently 32% of direct payments go to 1.5% of farmers without justification for the need for income support Evidence shows that apart from some targeted spending through agri-environment- climate measures, the CAP still overall supports the intensification of farming and environmental degradation (Reference: Is the CAP Fit for purpose? An evidence-based, rapid Fitness- Check assessment)</p>
<p>Justification in terms of expected impact</p>	<p>List the expected direct and indirect socio-economic and environmental impacts of your demands, underpin with data if available</p>	<p>For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration of ecosystem services, also a precondition for farming and a healthy environment • Long term perspective for farmers, generational renewal in rural areas • Producing healthy food with public health benefits • Cutting food waste, which increases sectoral efficiency • Achieving greater CAP support for CAP payments
<p>Proposed ways to achieve</p>	<p>You can refer to the proposals of the European campaign or work out more detailed ones</p>	<p>For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacing the current “two-pillar system” with targeted support based on a programmatic approach with national co- financing • introduce new financial instruments, which support transition to sustainable agriculture, sustainable supply chains, Natura 2000 and the delivery of ecosystem services • decisions on environmental components of the CAP must be taken by the relevant environmental authorities from EU to local level (More information: BirdLife position paper, October)

The sooner you have this overview of your needs and links to the bigger picture, the greater chance you get to succeed!

2.

Voice your opinion

2.1 Voice your opinion in the current debate about the future of Europe

- Try arrange media appearances and interventions in public debates about the Future of Europe that are being organised in your countries and call for the **6th Scenario** and a **People's Budget** to drive it.
- Print and share the text of the 6th scenario widely - we need a critical mass of people talking about it
- Put a face on the People's Budget campaign - for example by bringing affected people (who cannot access/afford EU Funded programmes that are supposed to benefit them) in front of media, or bringing them to national Future of Europe Debates, or even to Brussels before the European Parliament

2.2 Participate in the online EU consultation

The European Commission will collect the opinions about the priorities of the next MFF from various stakeholders. All stakeholders, including European and national NGOs and citizens can provide their views.

It is important that not only national governments, businesses and trade unions participate in the online consultation, but NGOs and citizens as well. The provided answers, as well as their numbers will affect the European Commission's position when preparing the next MFF proposal. The People's Budget campaign will also disseminate discussion points to facilitate the fill in of the questionnaire.

The online public consultations are published here:

https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations_en

2.3 Ask for a meeting with the ministry/entity in charge of negotiating the next MFF with the European Commission

National governments are the first actors influencing the new MFF through the European Council (of the heads of governments) and Council of the European Union (working on various topics).

While informal negotiations about the next MFF have started with the Member States, the first formal debates will be only in 2018 (unclear, when). The entities involved are usually the ministries, but it could also be an inter-ministerial agency. It depends on the country.

When meeting the respective entity, you should find out the following:

- a. What priorities do they have for the next MFF and why?**
- b. Would they politically support sustainability proofing the next MFF?**
- c. Are they open for the specific NGO proposals to make it happen?**
- d. Are they open for your specific sectoral asks?**

The current MFF legislation introduced the partnership principle for European Structural and Investment Funds, which obliges the Member States to involve civil society in the preparation and implementation. Asking for a meeting with your government is in line with the current practice, even if the details of public involvement are not yet laid out for the next MFF. It is also one of our key asks to strengthen the partnership principle for the future.

3.

Send national information and your position to Brussels

Indeed, the European Commission and the Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) have their own information about the socio-economic situation of each Member State. Why not helping them in telling them the situation in terms of the needs?

You could also send your position and national examples directly to the relevant MEPs in various committees (please also copy in Brussels based colleagues in your correspondence, see below):

Please do not forget to share any kind of national information with your own European federation and with the People's Budget campaign coordinators! Information about the position of your ministries, your own recommendations, local and national examples, case studies and storified case

studies (presenting real people's true stories with photos) are essential for EU level lobbying efforts. They might be useful to forward to the relevant European Commission officers or Members of the European Parliament, share on the campaign website or include in lobby papers.

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People's Budget campaign website:

www.peoplesbudget.eu



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