STAKEHOLDER VIEWS on the next EU budget cycle

Results of the stakeholder survey designed by SDG Watch Europe

Highlights from the 314 stakeholder responses

The great majority of the respondents (95.8%) agree or strongly agree with the question statement, that the EU budget should be a key driver for a more sustainable future for Europe.

When elaborating how the new EU Budget cycle could better contribute to improving people’s lives and their well-being, respondents most frequently mention paying more attention to the well-being and the real needs of the society (like investing in youth, families, research, health and education), contributing to a green economy, and implementing and mainstreaming Sustainable Development Goals and sustainability as a way of increasing people’s wellbeing.

EU funding should be also able to reflect on local needs and be more transparent, also as a way of showing to the people how the EU budget makes their lives better.

For strengthening the social dimension of the European Union through the EU budget many respondents stress the need for allocating more funds to social inclusion and social cohesion at different levels, where the application of subsidiarity is also essential.

For improving the quality of environment respondents mostly mentioned the transition to a low carbon economy with the help of the EU budget and the phasing out of environmentally harmful subsidies. To make this happen, respondents also urge mainstreaming environmental and climate aspects in the EU budget and other policies and also mention sustainability proofing as a methodological framework.

Replies also emphasize the importance of local circumstances and thus call for an increase the number of small scale EU funded projects implemented by local communities.

Replies also urge that the EU budget cycle should devote more funds to the transition of the economy from the current domination of the economic growth paradigm to another model, and to building a circular economy.

Ways to promote good governance in the next EU budget cycle first of all include more participation – of citizens, NGOs, experts, local communities, etc. – in the opinion of the respondents, which should be complemented by a strengthened monitoring system (leading
Most of the respondents (87%) agree or strongly agree with the question statement that the next EU budget cycle should clearly direct public money to serve the public good and avoid serving private interests. However, interpretations vary on defining “public good” and “private interests”.

Most of the respondents (93%) agree or strongly agree that the next EU budget cycle should increase policy coherence for sustainable development. Taking a holistic view to avoid shifting negative impacts to other areas, horizontal integration of legislations, cross-sectoral cooperation and aligning EU policies and thus the EU budget with global agreements, such as the 2030 Agenda or the Paris Agreement are the most often mentioned ways to achieve this.

Most of the respondents (84%) agree or strongly agree with using incentives and/or conditionalities to increase the efficiency of the use of EU funds by MSs. Applying ex ante and ex post conditionalities (e.g. anti-discrimination; gender equality, implementing environmental objectives) to all EU funding instruments is mentioned as one possible way of implementation.

The stakeholder responses were collected through an online survey in early 2017. The above opinions do not necessarily reflect the views of SDG Watch Europe.