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**2021-2027 EU budget – EESC pleased to see views of civil society having an impact**

**The European Council has adopted the compromise on the European budget and the recovery fund plus a rule of law mechanism. It takes into consideration the proactive and comprehensive contribution of the European Economic and Social Committee** **(EESC) in favour of a more ambitious Multiannual Financial Framework for the EU. By supporting the European recovery and helping build a stronger, greener and more digital European Union, the Committee is continuing to play a unique role in EU policy‑making.**

The EESC welcomes the adoption by the EU's Heads of State and Government of the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027 on 10 December 2020. The Committee's input as the voice of civil society organisations has once again proved to be important, as demonstrated by the many EESC opinions on the EU's long-term budget that were taken on board by the other EU institutions.

*"It is our duty to communicate the benefits that the increase in the 2021-2027 budget has for civil society. I am happy to note that the EESC contribution made a difference. The agreement on the new Multiannual Financial Framework and on the new Recovery and Resilience Facility is timely. We hope that it will be the starting point for a speedy recovery of Europe and the building block of a stronger and greener Union, and that the final result will be in line with the EU's ambitions and needs",* said **Cillian Lohan**, EESC vice-president in charge of communication.

**An adequate EU budget to rebuild a post-COVID-19 Europe, firmly embracing the green and digital transitions**

The EU now has a budget amounting to €1.8 trillion for the next seven years (2021-2027), if we include both the MFF and the new Recovery and Resilience Facility (RFF). The EESC had strongly supported a more ambitious budget in its opinion (ECO/460) on the [Multiannual Financial Framework after 2020](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/multiannual-financial-framework-after-2020), drafted by **Javier Doz Orrit**, proposing that the expenditure and revenue figure of the MFF reach 1.3% of GNI and arguing that Europeans needed more (and better) Europe.

**More than 50% of EU funds will support European recovery and digitalisation**

The objective of the budget increase – thanks to new Recovery and Resilience Facility – is to help Europe's post-pandemic recovery and to make the EU a more resilient, greener and more digital Union. The agreement allocates more than 50% of the funds to preparedness, recovery and resilience (Recovery and Resilience Facility, rescEU and the new health programme EU4Health), modernisation through research and innovation (Horizon Europe), and fair climate and digital transitions (Just Transition Fund and Digital Europe Programme).

In this respect, the Committee had once again urged the European Commission and the Member States to increase the EU budget and approve the EU recovery plan swiftly, in order to speed up European recovery, support citizens and enterprises, and invest in the digital and green future (opinion ECO/523 on the [Recovery plan for Europe and the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/recovery-plan-europe-and-multiannual-financial-framework-2021-2027) by **Petru Sorin Dandea**, **Tommaso Di Fazio** and **Petr Zahradník**, position paper ECO/524 on [Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe (REACT-EU)](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/react-eu) by **Antonello Pezzini**, opinion ECO/527 on the [Recovery and Resilience Facility and Technical Support Instrument](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/recovery-and-resilience-facility-and-technical-support-instrument) by **Dimitris Dimitriadis** and opinion ECO/528 on the [Renewed InvestEU programme and the Solvency Support Instrument](https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/renewed-investeu-programme-and-solvency-support-instrument) by **Ronny Lannoo**).

**30% of the EU budget will be spent on fighting climate change**

The EU's funds for 2021-2027 will have the highest share ever dedicated to the fight against climate change and the protection of biodiversity. On this issue, the EESC had called for an ambitious EU that must be able to address these challenges with an average 40% of its overall budget (opinion NAT/735 on the [European Finance-Climate Pact](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/european-finance-climate-pact-own-initiative-opinion), drafted by **Rudy De Leeuw**).

**EU budget to be protected, for the first time, against breaches of the rule of law**

The agreement also introduces a much-needed conditionality regime that makes it possible to protect the EU budget where it is established that breaches of the principles of the rule of law in a Member State affect or seriously risk affecting the sound financial management of the EU budget or the protection of the EU financial interests in a sufficiently direct way. Once again, this is a success story for the EESC, as the Committee has consistently stressed that fundamental values, as set out in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union, are non-negotiable.

Another request that has been taken on board is that the consequences of triggering the mechanism should not fall on individual beneficiaries of EU funding, such as Erasmus students, researchers or civil society organisations. The EESC has always insisted that these consequences should instead be borne by those responsible for the breaches, and that alternative ways have to be sought to ensure that the funds reach the intended beneficiaries (opinion SOC/598 on [The Union's budget and the rule of law](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/unions-budget-and-rule-law), produced by **Jukka Ahtela**, and opinion SOC/627 on [Further strengthening the Rule of Law within the Union. State of play and possible next steps](http://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/further-strengthening-rule-law-within-union-state-play-and-possible-next-steps-communication) by **Jukka Ahtela**, **Karolina Dreszer-Smalec** and **José Antonio Moreno Díaz**).

For further information on the EESC opinions that are reflected in the MFF, please take a look at the appendix.

**For more information, please contact:**

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*The European Economic and Social Committee represents the various economic and social components of organised civil society. It is an institutional consultative body established by the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Its consultative role enables its members, and hence the organisations they represent, to participate in the EU decision-making process.*

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