



**Group of the Progressive Alliance of
Socialists & Democrats
in the European Parliament**

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Dear President von der Leyen,

European citizens find themselves confronted by multiple challenges, ranging from the resurgence of war on our continent and in our immediate neighbourhood, to the ongoing climate emergency manifesting in devastating wildfires and severe floods, and a pervasive sense of economic insecurity coupled with the worsening social conditions. This new European political cycle is inviting us to show that the EU Budget is much more than a set of funds and rules, and that it can transform lives and livelihoods for the better.

In May 2025, the European Parliament adopted its own-initiative report outlining the key priorities it requests to see addressed in the legislative proposal for the post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework. The S&D Group is the leading progressive force in the European Parliament and has been a key player in its adoption. We now call on the Commission to take our priorities on board when it drafts its budgetary and legislative proposals to be negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council. In order to achieve this, and in the light of the highly worrying information that has been released in the past weeks, please find hereafter three core issues we would like to draw your attention to:

- We will strongly oppose the 'one national plan per Member State' approach, as envisaged by the Commission for shared management spending post-2027, as well as the possibility for national plans to be underpinned by a "payment against reforms" rule. A robust, efficient cohesion policy is key in the future MFF. Cohesion policy needs to meet current challenges and deliver on new priorities in Europe, but this must not detract from its core objectives of promoting social, territorial, and economic convergence. It strongly contributes to the wellbeing of citizens, the resilience of Europe's societies, the fair functioning of the Single Market and Europe's competitiveness. Future cohesion policy should then come with a strong financial mandate in the next EU long-term budget, built on a bottom-up, place-based and long-term approach. For the same reasons, the CAP cannot be diluted in national plans and subjected to conditionality under reforms.
- We need a separate, self-standing strong European Social Fund+ with earmarked funding for key social priorities. This is the main condition for truly implementing the European Pillar of Social Rights. Article 162 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union outlines the objectives and measures related to social policy and the European Social Fund is the primary instrument for strengthening the social dimension of the Union. It must be safeguarded and its resources must be increased. Additionally, we want to preserve the European Parliament's role in monitoring the spending for these priorities and oppose the merging of the objectives of ESF+ under the broader National and Regional Partnership Plans.


- We urge for a much bigger and better upcoming EU multiannual budget, which should go beyond the current level of 1% of the EU-27's Gross National Income in order to fund new priorities without cutting or redirecting means from core EU programmes. The global geopolitical landscape has shifted dramatically, underscoring the urgent need for a sufficiently resourced MFF beyond 2027. This is only possible if we have a genuine system of new EU own resources together with new joint borrowing. We need to move forward with additional genuine own resources, beyond the ones included in the Inter-Institutional Agreement of December 2020. We are eagerly expecting the Commission's additional proposals in this regard.

I hope, dear President, that under your leadership, the Commission will craft an ambitious and forward-looking MFF proposal that strengthens the Union's unity and ability to face its responsibilities in an unstable world. Our group is committed to enhancing our citizens' wellbeing and prosperity, and this is the mandate we are called to defend as one of the pro-European Groups that ensured your election in July 2024 and supported your related work programme.

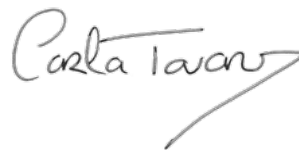
The urgency of the political situation does not allow useless political games that would only be detrimental to the cohesion of our societies and, in turn, to the future of the European Union. We therefore expect from the European Commission full collaboration at both institutional and political level to allow the European Parliament to exercise its budgetary prerogatives. This is the prerequisite to ensuring the Parliament's consent, which requires a majority of its component Members as enshrined in the Treaties on this specific file.

Please accept, dear President Von der Leyen, the expression of our highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,



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S&D Group in the European Parliament



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