

## Article – President Sassoli to EU leaders: help get the budget negotiations moving again



President Sassoli urged the EU heads of government to update the negotiating mandate they have given to the German Council presidency to make agreement on the EU long-term budget possible.

He noted that Parliament's negotiators have asked for an [additional €39 billion for key EU programmes](#) that benefit Europeans and promote a sustainable recovery. "This is a paltry sum when set against an overall package worth €1.8 trillion, but one which would make an enormous difference to the citizens who will benefit from our common policies," President Sassoli said, referring to the total amount of the seven-year budget and the Covid-19 recovery plan.

Mr Sassoli noted that if Parliament's compromise proposal is accepted by the Council, the budget spending ceiling will have to be raised by only €9 billion and this will bring the ceiling of those programmes to exactly the same level of spending as in the 2014-2020 period in real terms.

He said that the interest payments for the debt that the EU plans to issue to finance the recovery must be counted on top of the programme ceilings so as not to further squeeze the financing of these policies. The recovery plan "is an extraordinary commitment, and therefore the cost of the interest should be

treated as an extraordinary expense as well. It should not come down to a choice between these costs and the [budget] programmes”.

The President also stressed the need for a binding timetable for the introduction of [new types of budget revenue](#) over the coming years and for flexible provisions in the budget to finance unforeseen future events.

Mr Sassoli defended Parliament’s [demand for ambitious emission reduction targets](#). “We must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2030. We need a target, which acts as a bright beacon on the path to climate neutrality. Protecting the environment means new jobs, more research, more social protection, more opportunities.”

“We should use the economic stimuli provided by public institutions to radically change our growth models while guaranteeing a fair transition that works for us and for future generations. No one should be left behind,” he added.

Commenting on the ongoing negotiations on future EU-UK relations, Mr Sassoli expressed concern about the lack of clarity from the UK side. “I hope that our UK friends use the very narrow window of opportunity that remains to work constructively towards overcoming our differences,” he said, adding that the UK should honour its commitments and remove the controversial provisions in its internal market act.