

Press release – Long-term EU budget: Parliament wants safety net for beneficiaries



On Wednesday, MEPs adopted a [legislative resolution](#) by 616 votes in favour, 29 against and 46 abstentions, requesting that the European Commission submit a proposal for an MFF (Multiannual Financial Framework) contingency plan by 15 June 2020.

While current budgetary ceilings would be automatically extended if no new MFF is in place next year, nonetheless many programmes will expire at the end of 2020, like cohesion, Erasmus or research programmes. The aim is to provide a safety net for citizens, regions, cities, farmers, universities or businesses who benefit from EU programmes, and rule out any risk of the current MFF and programmes being discontinued or extended in a disorderly way.

Focus on tackling consequences of COVID-19

MEPs say the plan should refocus the budget temporarily on addressing and mitigating the immediate economic and social consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak and on helping in the recovery by adding flexibility and funding, as was already [done under this year's budget](#).

On 17 April, the EP called for a [massive recovery and reconstruction package](#) that involves increasing the MFF. According to today's resolution, the contingency plan would provide a better basis than a late or inadequate MFF for the European Union's recovery and political priorities.

Quotes

[Jan Olbrycht](#) (EPP, PL), co-rapporteur: "The current situation needs extraordinary solutions. We are afraid that the new MFF 2021-2027 will not be ready on time due to accumulated, severe delays. Therefore, we urge the European Commission to propose a contingency plan for next year's budget. In times of crises and instability, beneficiaries of the EU budget should have a clear vision of the next year. Members of the European Parliament are searching for all possible solutions to secure the stability of the EU budget."

[Margarida Marques](#) (S&D, PT), co-rapporteur: "Citizens, businesses and civil society would not understand why on 1 January 2021, we don't have an EU Budget in place. If it was already difficult to accept this before this pandemic, it is much more difficult now with the severe impact of COVID-19 on families, schools, businesses and economies."

We call on the European Commission to present an ambitious EU budget proposal on time for the next seven years, with an anchored Recovery Fund that meets citizens' expectations. The Commission is already delayed in presenting its new proposal; the European Council must reach an agreement and the European Parliament must give its consent. But we cannot take any further risks. We call once more on the European Commission to present a Contingency Plan. This plan must be effective and provide a safety net for beneficiaries of EU programmes."

Background

As the current long-term EU budget runs out on 31 December 2020, the EU needs a new budgetary planning horizon for the next seven years. The EU Commission thus presented plans for the next MFF for 2021-2027 in [May 2018](#), and announced a new proposal for May 2020 to take account of the health crisis and its consequences. The European Parliament adopted its position in [November 2018](#), and re-confirmed it in [October 2019](#). The Council has not yet been able to agree on a position.

Next steps

The report has been endorsed by a majority of Parliament's component members. As a consequence, the Commission has to either submit a relevant proposal, or else must inform Parliament of the reasons why it will not do so, according to [article 225](#) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

Upon her approval as Commission President by Parliament last July, Commission President von der Leyen [pledged](#): "When this House, acting by majority of its Members, adopts Resolutions requesting the Commission to submit legislative proposals, I commit to responding with a legislative act in full respect of

the proportionality, subsidiarity, and better law-making principles.”