Pushing for a more socially sustainable Europe

For the Social Platform, the next multiannual financial framework (MFF) is an opportunity to shift the balance of the EU budget towards people-centred policies. Investing in social cohesion and inclusive policies is a prerequisite to more resilient economies, safer societies and upward convergence across the Union.



Jana Hainsworth,
President of Social Platform

As the EU's main investment instrument, a Cohesion Policy that strongly promotes social objectives is key to this endeavour. In this respect, we enthusiastically note that the Commission's sectoral budget proposals make a valuable contribution to a more social Europe.

The future European Social Fund (ESF+) is of particular relevance in this context. The proposal sets clear investment objectives to support the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights with its key principles to promote quality employment, education and social inclusion. This is supported by an enabling regulatory framework which strongly promotes sustainable development through local initiatives – an encouraging push towards a more socially, environmentally and economically sustainable Europe.

Delivering on these objectives together with the European Pillar of Social Rights will require strong and equitable partnerships between public authorities, social partners and civil society. Together with our members, representing 49 civil society umbrella organisations working in the social sector across the EU, we will closely monitor the MFF interinstitutional negotiations and advocate for an ambitious Cohesion Policy which can deliver social progress for all.

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European funds for all – investing in people

There is no doubt that Cohesion Policy is essential to create a Europe for everybody. Over the years, the Cohesion Policy and funds have made an important contribution to the inclusion of people with disabilities, even in Europe's most remote regions.

However, the post-2020 proposal concerns me. The proposed budget cut will affect Europe's most disadvantaged, especially in regions where they are most vulnerable. At a time when anti-European sentiment is growing, this reduced budget risks stoking those flames. Furthermore, it risks creating two Europes – those who are prospering and the socially excluded who will be driven further away from the European project.



Yannis Vardakastanis,
president of the European
Disability Forum

That said, we acknowledge the Commission's efforts to simplify the funds. We hope that this simplification will ensure more people with disabilities can access funding and see a real, positive difference in their daily lives. To make this a reality, it is essential that regulations guarantee civil society organisations are meaningfully involved from the very beginning of the process. The provision for partnership must be kept and