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ETUC Press release

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67 cents a day to ensure a future for both people and planet

An EU budget that amounts to just 67 cents per day per person can ensure the next seven years will deliver most for people and planet. However, the cuts to the proposed budget for 2014 – 2020 currently discussed by EU leaders will prevent concrete actions in response to the economic crisis

On February 8th Member States will finalise their negotiations on the next Multi Annual Financial Framework. They must agree on a budget

that will meet the challenges represented by the current crisis: growing inequality, persisting poverty within Europe and beyond, food insecurity, ecosystem collapse and resource constraints, unsustainable growth, global competition, ageing of the population, technological change and the transition towards a low carbon economy.

Ahead of this summit the Spring Alliance* has called on EU leaders to keep the overall amount of the EU budget (1.025€ billion of commitments and 972.2€ billion of payments) as proposed by the Commission and to ensure that at least 20% of the MFF is spent on Climate Change related activities. Reductions proposed to the budget will particularly affect cohesion policy – which represents the main source of public funding for social and economic development – development policy, and the EU's only dedicated environment fund LIFE+.

Conny Reuter, Social Platform President *"In its draft employment report the Commission confirmed employment is decreasing and prospects are bleak. The disparity within and between Member States has dramatically grown while the effects of social protection and automatic stabilisers have weakened since 2010. Proposing to reduce the EU budget is not only undermining social cohesion, it is undermining the whole European project by increasing the consequences on employment, education and poverty. We want a Europe build on solidarity, not on egoisms!"*

Bernadette Ségol, ETUC General Secretary *"Unfortunately it seems easier for the European Council to adopt austerity plans than to adopt a satisfactory Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-20. Even if the new proposal makes it look like cohesion funds have been protected, this is a smokescreen since they are being whittled down with every Council text. These are the funds need to drive social recovery in Europe".*

Jeremy Wates, Secretary General of the EEB commented: *"EU leaders face a clear choice between an EU budget which invests in genuinely sustainable solutions to environmental and social challenges and one which takes us further down the road of resource depletion and environmental damage. This is not a time to listen to the voices of short-term vested interests. "*

In particular the Spring Alliance is calling on member states to:

- **Support the 336 billion euro for the cohesion policy to respond to current and future needs. These funds** are the most important financial instrument for social and economic development of the EU. In many European regions these represent the main source

of public funding as national support has been cut as a consequence of the crisis and austerity measures.

- **Ensure the minimum allocation of 25% of the cohesion policy funds to the European Social Fund (ESF) and earmark 20% of the ESF to social inclusion and the fight against poverty.** Investment in human capital has the best impact in terms of medium term growth. The ESF is the major EU instrument to do this. In 2010 it supported more than 16 million people in Europe.
- **Reject cuts to the Rural Development Budget of the CAP** as this part of the budget is best designed to deliver for people and planet.
- **Increase the LIFE fund to 1% of the overall budget** as it has proven itself to be a highly efficient instrument in achieving environmental objectives. Investment in Ecosystems is a sound investment - tourism alone by Natura 2000 sites created 4.5 – 8 million full time jobs in the EU.
- **Protect the development budget, both for Heading 4 and the European Development Fund.** Development based on a Human Rights Based Approach with poverty eradication, fighting inequalities and with environmental sustainability at its heart, is an investment for the future; it creates peace, prosperity and well-being for all.

See the Spring Alliance [letter to member states](#) for our full recommendations

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* The Spring Alliance is a broad-based movement pushing for an EU that places people and planet at the centre of policymaking. It was established by four leading civil society organisations – the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the European Trade Union

Confederation (ETUC), Social Platform and Concord – and is composed of groups and individuals from civil society and beyond.

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The European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC) exists to speak with a single voice, on behalf of the common interests of workers, at European level. Founded in 1973, it now represents 85 trade union organisations in 36 European countries, plus 10 industry-based federations. The ETUC is also on [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) and [Flickr](#).

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