

# Public consultation on the next MFF: EU funding for the single market, and cooperation between national authorities

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

## Introduction

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The current multiannual financial framework – the EU’s long-term budget – runs until the end of 2027. In 2025, the Commission will submit comprehensive proposals for the post-2027 multiannual financial framework and for the next generation of financial programmes that will receive funding. These programmes /funds provide financial support to hundreds of thousands of beneficiaries such as public authorities, non-governmental organisations, businesses, farmers, students, scientists and many others.

Following President von der Leyen's [Political Guidelines for the 2024-2029 European Commission](#), the Commission will work together for a simpler, more focused and responsive long-term budget that reflects the EU’s strategic priorities with the ambition to be an ‘investment Commission’. This approach aims to align budget/funding with the strategic goals, priorities and policies. The multiannual financial framework for the period after 2027 must reflect this.

The Commission’s proposals will be designed to make it possible for the EU to deliver on the policies that matter most, in areas where it can achieve more than Member States acting alone. This requires a careful assessment both of what has worked well in the past and what could be improved in the future. The next EU budget will draw lessons from the current budget – notably in terms of simplicity and flexibility, speed and strategic focus.

As an integral part of the process, the Commission is launching a series of public consultations to gather views from all interested parties on how to make the very most of every euro of the EU budget.

To deliver on the abovementioned objectives, this consultation covers several policy areas, including the single market (networks, digital tools and interoperability,

skills, market surveillance, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) and competitiveness, standards, consumer protection, effective enforcement of EU competition policy, food safety), European statistics, customs (protection of the single market, supervision of the EU's international trade, customs controls, collection of customs duties), taxation (indirect taxes, direct taxation) as well as anti-fraud (fight against fraud, corruption and other illegal activities). The decision to cluster issues serves to support the preparatory work and does not pre-empt the architecture of future programmes.

Many challenges require a coordinated response and supporting services at EU level to improve the functioning of the single market, including by strengthening cooperation between national authorities. These policy areas aim to improve competitiveness across the EU to ensure sustainable prosperity.

The questionnaire consists of three parts. Part 1 collects some information about the respondent, while Part 2 contains questions related to EU funds addressing the single market and cooperation between national authorities. Part 3 contains two closing questions.

It should take about 9 minutes to complete the survey. You can save your replies as a draft and finish them later. Please limit your additional comments on the questions in the free text box. You can upload a document stating your views at the end of the survey.

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The Commission has identified relevant challenges linked to a well-functioning single market and cooperation between national authorities. How important are these challenges?

	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Not at all important	Don't know/not applicable
Empowering national authorities, citizens, consumers and businesses by addressing knowledge and data gaps and overcoming barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving cooperation and collaborative efforts and integration among Member States and between Member States and the Commission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harmonising Member States' approach in addressing gaps in financing, especially for SMEs, to stimulate growth and scaling up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring that rulemaking, standard-setting and enforcement at EU level remains evidence-based, effective and tailored to evolving needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing a fragmented and complex digital environment	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing regulatory fragmentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing differences in the interpretation of EU law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Optimising technical and administrative capacities for Member States, including civil society, to ensure a level playing field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing disparities in the digitalisation of public administration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Challenges related to the effective protection of EU funds against fraud, corruption and other illegal activity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Other (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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To what extent do the current policies address these challenges?

	To a large extent	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Don't know/not applicable
Empowering national authorities, citizens, consumers and businesses by addressing knowledge and data gaps and overcoming barriers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improving cooperation and collaborative efforts and integration among Member States and between Member States and the Commission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Harmonising Member States' approach in addressing gaps in financing, especially for SMEs, to stimulate growth and scaling up	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring that rulemaking, standard-setting and enforcement at EU level remains evidence-based, effective and tailored to evolving needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing a fragmented and complex digital environment in the EU	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing regulatory fragmentation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Optimising technical and administrative capacities among the Member States, including civil society, to ensure a level playing field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Addressing differences in the interpretation of EU law	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strengthening the digitalisation of public administration and addressing differences	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent do you see the following as obstacles to the EU budget achieving its objectives?

	To a large extent	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Don't know/not applicable
Too many programmes with overlapping policy goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of coordination or synergies between programmes	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Different and often complex fund-specific rules on access to funding and compliance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Administrative capacity at national, regional and regional level	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrative burden for beneficiaries, regional and national authorities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of flexibility to adapt to new and unforeseen developments	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Insufficient alignment with national policies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focus is on reimbursing costs rather than on achieving results	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
National regulatory environment makes EU funding less effective	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fraud, corruption and other illegal activities affecting the EU's financial interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent do you agree that the following options could help the EU budget become more effective and efficient?

	To a large extent	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Don't know/not applicable
Applying common rules, timelines and eligibility criteria to all relevant EU funds	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fewer, clearer and simpler rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Reducing the number of EU funding programmes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Introduce more flexibility into resource allocation to react to crises and emerging needs	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Use funds to promote both reforms and investments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Simplifying access to and information about funding for beneficiaries	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Place greater focus on achieving results, including via performance-based funding (such as financing not linked to costs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The current EU budget supports the single market and EU customs union, tax cooperation and anti-fraud measures, including transnational and cross-border benefits and economies of scale for businesses, consumers, citizens and national

authorities. The Commission has identified the following intervention areas. How important are these to you?

	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Not at all important	Don't know/not applicable
Supporting businesses to strengthen competitiveness in a fast-changing business environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting fair competition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting EU economic security through a customs union acting as one	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting fair taxation and reducing the tax gap	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the protection and empowerment of EU consumers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting capacity building, supervision and joint enforcement of EU rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Deploying common and/or interoperable digital solutions, including portals and tools	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting standardisation efforts (i.e. development of common standards)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensuring a high level of health and safety for people, animals and plants in the areas of plants, animals, food and feed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the development, production and dissemination of timely and comparable European statistics and data	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Upgrading EU customs with common governance and powerful central digital solutions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting the prevention and combating of fraud, corruption and other illegal activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what extent do you believe that actions at EU level would bring added value compared to actions at national level?

	To a large extent	Somewhat	Very little	Not at all	Don't know /not applicable
Remove discriminatory, unjustified or disproportionate obstacles to the free movement of goods, services and capital within the single market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevent unsafe or non-compliant products and services available in the single market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of EU businesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve access to funding for SMEs and other beneficiaries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote entrepreneurs and strengthen skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure a level playing field and empower businesses by enforcing and modernising competition rules	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure a high level of product standardisation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure high-quality financial and non-financial reporting and auditing standards	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure a high level of consumer protection	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure a high level of health and safety related to people, plants and animals, food and feed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide timely and comparable European statistics and close data gaps	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Modernise and streamline the functioning of the EU customs union by strengthening its governance mechanisms and digital solutions	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevent and combat fraud, corruption and any other illegal activities (including money laundering, tax fraud and illicit trade) affecting safety and security of citizens	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prevent and combat fraud and any other illegal activities affecting the EU budget	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure optimal revenue collection and reduce tax gaps in the EU between the tax revenue collected and what should have been collected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Facilitate trade with non-EU countries	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strengthen the digital transition to smarter data-driven approaches in public administration (including the judiciary)	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase EU-level coordination to streamline capacity building efforts across the EU	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support cross-border/multi-country projects and cross-border cooperation	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Address transnational challenges	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Which other strategic areas could be covered as part of a well-functioning single market, EU customs union, tax cooperation and anti-fraud measures, and cooperation between national administrations?

500 character(s) maximum

Strategic areas should include digital sovereignty, joint platforms for data protection and advertising transparency, stronger cybersecurity cooperation, and support for European digital champions.

In your opinion, which of the following aspects is the most important in providing support to improve the administrative and institutional capacity of national authorities in Member States? Please rank the three preferred options:

Use drag&drop or the up/down buttons to change the order or accept the initial order.

- ☐ Focus on key EU priorities where they bring more EU added value
- ☐ Predictability of the programming associated with investments financed by the EU
- ☐ Sustainability of actions over time
- ☐ Assist Member States in identifying the areas where technical support would be more impactful, taking into account national and EU priorities
- ☐ Possibility to support a wide variety of beneficiaries in public administrations at different levels
- ☐ Flexibility to address a wide variety of needs from Member States

### Part 3 - Closing questions

If you would like to add further information – within the scope of this questionnaire – feel free to do so here.

2000 character(s) maximum

The challenges identified by the Commission are highly significant. Addressing a fragmented and complex digital environment is urgent. The EU risks falling victim to “digital blackmail” by non-European powers who exploit dominance in trade and digital markets to dictate terms to citizens, businesses, and public authorities. Without coordinated digital sovereignty, our democracies remain exposed.



Despite some progress, EU policies only partially address these issues. Disparities in digital public services and lack of interoperability continue to hinder efficiency.

All these changes will require budget priorities- not only R&D, but direct help to relevant organisations, and simplified procedures given the urgency of the issues.

So as the EU prepares its 2027–2034 MFF, it must urgently adopt a Media Industrial Strategy, akin to its Defence Industrial Strategy, and allocating budgets to it- thankfully much less. The current plans were drafted before recent geopolitical upheavals. The EU must now act decisively to safeguard its media and information space. Structural rigidity in the budget and weak programme coordination reduce impact. The EU must be more agile, better funded, and better aligned.

Six strategic elements must drive this shift. Some have a budget dimension, a strong democracy shield must be defined. Eastern European media and civil society need urgent support after US-AID funding withdrawals. The MFF must address media resilience and hybrid threat defence. Sovereign equity funds must back European tech and media, including the overdue InvestEU NEWS.

Rest of the actors do not require new programmes, but can leverage and boost actions under Creative Europe, and notably what was foreseen under NEWS in Media and Audiovisual Action Plan (MAAP).

The EU must act now—by launching calls for proposals to support platforms like Euro-stack and TEMS, and by modernising governance to uphold Europe’s digital and democratic sovereignty.

## Contact

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