



The post-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework

Shaping the future of Europe's mountains

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Euromontana's position paper on the next EU
Multiannual Financial Framework

Europe is at a critical juncture, facing structural and contextual challenges that demand a united and decisive response. In this context, Euromontana calls for a robust and ambitious post-2027 European budget to build a stronger, sustainable, and resilient Europe.

The European Commission's new political priorities rightly recognise the changing international landscape. Defence issues have taken on an unprecedented importance, with mountain regions, in particular the Carpathians, among those most directly affected. At the same time, the competitiveness of the European Union remains a constant challenge, to which businesses in both traditional and emerging sectors in our territories can make a significant contribution.

Yet, **Euromontana resists the temptation to consider sustainability and territorial development as secondary objectives** in the next programming period. At a time when mountain areas are being hit harder and faster by climate change, and when 60% of mountain plant species in the Alps are at risk of disappearing by 2100, Euromontana stresses the **importance of European commitments to climate action and environmental protection** throughout its policies, and in particular the Cohesion and Common Agriculture Policy. And at a time when rural areas and agriculture are facing unprecedented socio-economic challenges, notably in terms of generational renewal, Euromontana underlines the importance of investing in structuring policies that can ensure the social **viability of mountain areas**.

Finally, Euromontana reaffirms the equal value of all territories, including mountainous, isolated, or sparsely populated areas, within the European model. In the spirit of Article 174 of the European Treaties, we strongly assert that **mountain areas must continue to receive sustained support through targeted rural development and territorial cohesion policies**.

An architecture and governance adapted to the needs of European territories

Euromontana welcomes the European Commission's ambition to simplify the implementation of European policies and the access to its programmes. We have long called for such simplification, especially for smaller entities, through the introduction of one-stop shops or simplified costs and reporting. However, encouraging **budget simplification should not prevent funds from being channelled where they are most needed**.

As highlighted in the European Commission's 9th Report on Economic, Social and Territorial Cohesion, mountain areas continue to face specific challenges that hamper economic growth and development and require policies to be further adapted to the specific economic profiles and geographical characteristics of these areas.

For this reason, **Euromontana strongly opposes any move towards national-level centralisation and the pooling of policies with different scopes and objectives**. We consider such approach to be counterproductive, as it does not fit the institutional reality and territorial diversity of several Member States. We therefore strongly advocate common objectives for all policies, defined at European level and implemented on a territorial basis in accordance with the partnership principle. The architecture of the post 2027 MFF should not be an obstacle to the **place-based policies** adapted to the regional and sub-regional needs of each territory, and European regions should not be the ones to carry the cost of simplification.

A strong, independent Common Agriculture Policy for farmers and rural areas

Agriculture is a cornerstone of European sovereignty, and mountain areas play an indispensable role, with 18% of farms and 15% of the EU's agricultural workforce. To secure fair incomes for farmers, provide safe and high-quality food, and reward sustainable practices, Euromontana stands for a strong and well-funded post-2027 CAP.

- Given the strategic importance of the CAP in ensuring food security, **we categorically reject its integration into national "Single Plans" covering multiple policies.** This would fragment the Single Market and create unnecessary administrative complexity. Instead, Euromontana thus reiterates its demand for a dedicated and strong budget for the post-2027 CAP to tackle economic, social, and environmental challenges effectively.
- To ensure the vitality and prosperity of rural areas and the achievement of the objectives of the EU's Vision for Agriculture and Food, **the CAP's rural development budget must be maintained and even strengthened.**
- Although mountain farming is one of the most sustainable agricultural models as well as a driver of local resilience, it remains fragile from a socio-economic point of view as it faces several structural disadvantages. Therefore, Euromontana calls for stronger support, including the **earmarking of at least 15% of the future CAP budget for payments to areas with natural constraints** and making the use of such payments compulsory in mountainous Member States.

A cohesion policy that offers prospects for all regions

The EU's regional policy has been a cornerstone of European unity, and a powerful tool for supporting **the "right to stay" in areas undergoing demographic, economic and environmental transitions such as mountain regions.** The post-2027 territorial cohesion must continue to support all territories and ensure long-term and consistent investment. In a context of global economic and geopolitical uncertainty, investing in regions should be considered a strategic priority at the service of Europe's resilience.

- Given the central role of regional policy in lives of European citizens and in building resilience for the continent, **Euromontana calls for a substantial cohesion policy budget** to be maintained in the next MFF. We resolutely oppose any proposal to integrate cohesion policy funds into a "Single Plan" that would be pooling together different policies, as this would introduce harmful variability in support to the most vulnerable areas, contradicting the very essence of European cohesion. Such a development would also weaken the very partnership principle that has made the cohesion policy a European success.
- Taking account of the ongoing and growing challenges faced by mountain areas, from access to services to support for businesses and adaptation to climate change, **Euromontana calls for at least 25% of the European Structural and Investment Funds to be earmarked for Article 174 territories, including 10% for mountain areas.** This objective should be achieved at European level, with Member States and regions having

the flexibility to adapt their contribution to these targets according to their own territorial context.

- To ensure better complementarity and coherence between the cohesion and agriculture policies, Euromontana calls for the European Commission to implement **clear and measurable rural development objectives** within the post 2027 Cohesion policy, thus enabling a better implementation of the Long-Term Vision for Rural Areas.