National recovery plans: historic opportunity for long-term sustainable growth

• Main focus on green and digital transition
• Funds must be fairly distributed across sectors, societies and future generations
• MEPs against any political concessions that dilute requirements and targets
• Projects and measures must not go against EU values

Parliament insists that national recovery plans must fully meet the agreed requirements and targets for fair and green growth and digital transformation

The resolution on the ongoing evaluation of the national recovery plans submitted so far by EU member states to the Commission (23 as of 8 June) was adopted on Thursday with 514 votes to 163 and 9 abstentions. MEPs stress that the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) is a historic EU instrument that must not only mitigate the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but must also have a lasting impact on prosperity and help distribute growth fairly. They call on the Commission to only approve plans that fully meet the targets and goals agreed in the RRF regulation and to not bow to any political pressure.

Most important areas: climate and digital transition

MEPs demand that the Commission carefully assesses and ensures that each of the national recovery and resilience plans (RRPs) contributes effectively to the six agreed policy areas: the green transition, digital transformation, competitiveness, social cohesion, institutional crisis-reaction and preparedness, and the next generation including education and skills.

Plans have to dedicate at least 37% of their budget to climate protection, they stress, including biodiversity, and the “do no significant harm” provisions are a crucial tool for supporting the green transition.

MEPs point out that the budget dedicated to digital actions (20%) must contribute to the digital transition including security issues, the EU’s strategic interests and digital infrastructure.
Fair growth throughout the EU

In order to ensure the highest possible impact, the funds must be fairly distributed across sectors, societies and with future generations and gender equality in mind, MEPs underline. They discourage projects without real added value being repackaged and insist that all reforms and investments must be linked to milestones, targets and costs that are relevant, clear, detailed and adequately monitored with the help of common indicators. Such measures should help prevent and detect corruption, fraud and conflicts of interest when the funds are being used.

Finally, MEPs point to the Rule of Law Conditionality Regulation and stress no project can go against EU values. They want to ensure that civil society, social partners, and local and regional authorities are consulted in the implementation and the monitoring of the plans in order to better involve the recipients and make the plans transparent.

Background

In the resolution adopted on 20 May, Parliament called for more democratic scrutiny of national recovery strategies to actively oversee the Recovery and Resilience Facility, a stimulus package designed to help EU countries tackle the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further information

Committee on Economic and Monetary Affairs
Committee on Budgets
Adopted text (10.06.2021)
Press release: Parliament demands democratic scrutiny over national recovery efforts
Resolution: The right of information of the Parliament regarding the ongoing assessment of the national recovery and resilience plans (20.05.2021)

Plenary debates (08.06.2021)
European Parliament Think Tank: Recovery plan for Europe: State of play (07.06.2021)

Recovery and Resilience Facility website European Commission
The European Parliament’s role: Articles 25 and 26 of the RRF regulation
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