



31st Council
10-13 June 2020
Online
by the European Greens

Draft

Title: **EUROPE IS NOT FOR SALE – For a sovereign, just and democratic Europe**

Tabled by: EGP Committee

1 Europe was built on a promise of peace, democracy and solidarity. A promise to
2 overcome division, protect fundamental rights and build a future of shared
3 prosperity. Today, climate disasters, rising cost of living, a housing crisis
4 and war threaten this promise.

5 Yet when Europe needs solidarity and action, the far right and conservative
6 forces undermine its independence. They claim to defend sovereignty while
7 serving fossil fuel lobbies and authoritarian regimes. They claim to protect
8 people while putting profits before homes and public services. They claim to
9 defend democracy while siding with tech oligarchs and scapegoating minorities.
10 Conservatives increasingly enable the far right.

11 Europe's values, democracy and sovereignty are not for sale. Ahead of crucial
12 election years, it is our responsibility to stand up for Europe. Democratic
13 victories in Hungary and Serbia show that the far right can be defeated. There
14 is hope in Europe.

Demands

A Green vision for a sovereign Europe

16 We fight for an independent, democratic and sustainable Europe that puts people
17 and planet before profit.

We are fighting for a sovereign and sustainable Europe.

We demand investment in renewables, grids and energy efficiency to end fossil fuel dependence, cut autocrats' war funding, lower bills, and create quality jobs. Europe must meet the Paris Agreement, protect and restore biodiversity, guarantee clean air and water, and recognise the rights of nature.

We are fighting for an affordable and socially just Europe.

Homes are for living, not speculation. We demand affordable housing, investments in public and cooperative housing, energy-efficient renovations and strong tools for local authorities to tackle speculation. A just transition must deliver renewable energy, energy communities, public transport, fair wages and social protection. Essential services – from housing and energy to healthcare, education, mobility and digital connectivity – must be guaranteed to all. No child should be left without three meals a day. The wealthiest, multinationals and major polluters must pay their fair share.

We are fighting for a strong and economically independent Europe.

We demand investment in green industries, sustainable infrastructure and a circular economy that creates jobs and keeps value in Europe. European industry must be protected from imports undermining environmental, social and labour standards. We reject deregulation and a race to the bottom.

We are fighting for a safe and resilient Europe.

Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and hybrid threats require stronger European cooperation on defence, deterrence, and preparedness. We stand with Ukraine to defend its sovereignty and secure a just, lasting peace. As Europe's security partnerships change, the EU must strengthen its capacity to protect its people. Security also means resilience to climate disasters and cyberattacks, and communities that withstand crises and recover together, as well as investing in diplomacy and peacebuilding.

We are fighting for a democratic Europe.

We will defend democracy against authoritarianism, foreign interference and tech

oligarchs. Europe must enforce its digital rules and protect independent media, civil society, privacy, digital freedoms and fair elections. Europe must strengthen its technological independence and ensure AI serves people and fundamental rights, not corporate interests. We defend women's rights, reproductive freedom, LGBTIQ+ rights, and the rights of older people, persons with disabilities and ethnic, national and regional minorities. We stand with those resisting authoritarianism, from students in Serbia to political prisoners and democratic opposition in Turkey.

We are fighting for a Europe that respects international law.

Human rights and international law must guide Europe's actions consistently. We defend the self-determination of Palestinians and Israelis and demand an end to the genocide against the Palestinian people, the protection of civilians and unhindered humanitarian access. The EU must use its political and economic leverage to uphold international law and support the International Court of Justice and the International Criminal Court, including arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Gallant. We call for an end to attacks on civilians and military escalation in Iran, Lebanon and across the region, and respect for state sovereignty and territorial integrity. We demand accountability for violations of international law and civilian suffering, from Gaza to Sudan, Yemen and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Hope is Green

Across Europe, Greens are proving another future is possible. Our advances in Latvia, Sweden, Denmark, Germany and the United Kingdom show the strength of our vision. Green mayors and councillors, from Budapest and Copenhagen to Riga, Zagreb, Munich and Lyon, are delivering on housing, public services, climate adaptation and local democracy.

Citizens, civil society, feminist movements and young people are building fairer, greener and more inclusive societies. Political leaders must support and empower them. Europe's future belongs to its people. There is hope, and that hope is Green.

We call on democratic and progressive forces to build a sovereign, socially just and sustainable Europe, open to those who share our values, from Ukraine and the Western Balkans to the UK.

80 **We will fight for an independent Europe rooted in compassion, co-operation and**
81 **strength. Europe is not for sale.**



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Title: **A budget for a sovereign Europe**

Tabled by: Bündnis90/Die Grünen

1 A strong EU budget is an investment in a sovereign Europe. A green, just and
2 resilient Europe needs investment in climate protection, social justice and
3 security.

4 We welcome the simplified architecture of the Multiannual Financial
5 Framework(MFF) and the integration of new priorities such as competitiveness and
6 innovation, security and defence. However, we criticise the renationalisation of
7 EU funds through the creation of national envelopes for cohesion, social and
8 agricultural policy.

9 Own resources can both stabilise and strengthen the Union's budget, while
10 reducing reliance on Member State contributions. The introduction of new own
11 resources and fair taxation of big tech companies will make the EU budget more
12 sustainable. This is necessary not only to cover the investments made under the
13 'NextGenerationEU', but also to enable investment in the future. In addition,
14 common European borrowing should remain a tool to finance European public goods
15 and innovative projects.

16 EU Member States fixating on fiscal austerity rather than acknowledging the need
17 for extensive investments in key areas, such as the energy sector, security and
18 defence as well as sustainable infrastructure, are risking the competitiveness
19 and sovereignty of Europe. Horizontal cuts to the Commission's proposal would be
20 a strategic mistake. We call on EU Member States to ensure that the next MFF is
21 able to support Europe's economic development and sustainability and therefore
22 its' independence.

Strengthening local communities and European regions

National and Regional Partnership Plans (NRPPs) must invest in regions and rural areas, ensuring Europe's visibility at the local level. Cohesion Policy and the European Social Fund+ (ESF+) require guaranteed allocations. NRPPs should enable a just green transition, invest in sustainable social infrastructure and implement the European Pillar of Social Rights by promoting equal opportunities, education and training, and tackling poverty and social exclusion.

At least 30% of NRPP resources should go to rural areas. Local authorities, civil society, implementing partners and citizens must be involved in programming and implementation. Shared management must be maintained, with regions acting as independent partners.

Rule of law, resilient democracies and global solidarity

Growing threats to democracy and open societies require strong rule-of-law safeguards in the next MFF to ensure transparent EU spending and prevent corruption and misuse. Independent courts, impartial investigations, independent journalism and equal application of the law are essential for accountability and protecting public funds. Where national governments fail to ensure fair and transparent distribution, the Commission should manage funds directly rather than penalise regional and local beneficiaries.

Citizens, journalists and civil society must have easy access to information on EU funding beneficiaries and project implementation. Transparency is key to preventing corruption and rebuilding democratic trust.

At least 20% of the Global Europe instrument should support resilient societies, strong civil society, independent media and sound governance, both inside and outside the EU.

These priorities can strengthen the EU's resilience and independence, public trust and democratic accountability.

Demands

The European Green Party calls for:

- The MFF must provide at least 1.27% of EU GNI, excluding debt repayment under 'NextGenerationEU' financed outside the MFF ceilings and on a more gradual schedule.
- A horizontal spending target of 50 % contributing to climate and environment protection, as well as 20 % for social policies. Steps must be taken to ensure that EU funds do not finance activities that cause significant harm to climate and environmental goals.
- The introduction of new own resources, including fair taxation of digital companies and cryptocurrencies, and the allocation of part of the Emissions Trading System (ETS) and Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism revenues to the EU budget to finance decarbonisation and support a just transition. To curb aggressive tax competition, a share of corporate tax revenues should be allocated to the EU, with lower-tax countries contributing a larger share.
- By means of the European Competitiveness Fund (ECF) the next MFF will create a new instrument to boost Europe's competitiveness. The Commission and EU Member States should ensure that the ECF resources are aimed at creating European added value and transnational infrastructure rather than strengthening national industries.
- The allocated resources for migration and asylum tripled compared to the current MFF. The additional funding should be directed towards supporting EU Member States in the protection of asylum seekers and the integration of migrants, rather than on costly and legally questionable externalisation programmes such as return hubs outside of the EU.
- Introduce effective measures to prevent EU Member States from gold-plating EU funding through additional administrative burdens.

Background

Negotiations on the EU's next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) are entering a critical phase. Member states must now decide how much resources to commit for the 2028–2034 EU budget. In the Council negotiations, two groups are facing off: the “Frugals” (including Germany, Denmark, the Netherlands, Sweden and Austria), pushing for substantial budget cuts, and the “Friends of Cohesion” (15–16 southern and eastern such as Spain, Italy, Poland, Romania, and Portugal), seeking to preserve agricultural and cohesion funding. If both camps prevail in their demands, the EU budget risks significant cuts in relevant areas.

This motion calls on member states to invest in emerging priorities, which are currently most at risk of cuts like the European Competitiveness Fund or Global Europe. A sovereign and capable Europe needs investment in innovation, climate protection, research, competitiveness and defence. Additionally, we call for a shift away from reliance on national contributions towards new own resources and tax revenue streams, strengthening the EU's financial autonomy and ensuring a more sustainable budget.

The motion also stresses the need to firmly embed rule-of-law mechanisms and transparency standards in the use of EU funds by member states.

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Draft

Title: **Climate Adaptation Against Inequalities**

Tabled by: Europa Verde - Verdi

1 Time is up: the climate has changed. The 1.5°C target has been missed and it is
2 foreseen that 2027
3 will set a new record. Europe and the Mediterranean are warming faster than the
4 global average and face severe heat, wildfires, and water risks, including
5 droughts, floods, extreme precipitation, and glacier melting.

6 Mitigation remains indispensable, but adaptation can no longer be postponed.
7 Climate change amplifies inequalities: wealthier people and businesses can buy
8 protection, insurance, cooling and relocation, while poorer people rely on
9 public infrastructure and services for relief.

10 The crisis is visible. In summer 2026, Europe's fifth heatwave affected around
11 300 million people. Paris, London and Brussels experienced unprecedented
12 temperatures, associated with an estimated 35,000 deaths across the continent,
13 totalling 200,000 over the past four years. Heat and drought pushed rivers to
14 record lows and expanded wildfire risks beyond traditional southern hotspots.
15 The agricultural sector is facing declines in yields, changes in growing areas
16 and new pests. Floods, such as Storm DANA in Valencia, Spain, and landslides in
17 Sicily, have caused severe losses and damage.

18 Climate change is a threat multiplier while adaptation itself can actually
19 deepen inequalities through green gentrification and unequal access to
20 protection. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
21 and the European Environment Agency (EEA), older people, children, pregnant
22 women, people with chronic conditions and outdoor workers are the most

vulnerable, having fewer resources to adapt while facing greater exposure. Rural communities dependent on agriculture and tourism, people encountering housing and energy poverty, and densely-populated neighbourhoods are more vulnerable to extreme weather.

While right-wing politicians continue to minimise such problems, the Greens must promote inclusive, cooperative adaptation that protects people now while, at the same time, addressing structural causes, both locally and internationally.

Adaptation must be inclusive: affected communities must shape planning; EU funding must include social-justice criteria; and public infrastructure must take priority over private protection solutions.

Adaptation must be coordinated: governments, communities and businesses should share information, align investments and address interconnected risks, ensuring local adaptation does not create risks elsewhere.

Adaptation must be based on functioning ecosystems: public investment should prioritise innovative nature-based solutions, whereas the private sector can complement these efforts.

We need practical measures able to make an immediate impact on daily life.

Heat: guarantee free drinking water and cooling spaces; introduce heat health plans; enforce temperature thresholds and compensation for outdoor workers when work is unsafe; adapt school and office schedules and invest in insulation, cool roofs and green spaces.

Wildfires: strengthen firefighters, civil protection and critical infrastructures; improve early warnings and preparedness; establish firebreaks; balance active land management through diversification, restoration and the rewilding of ecosystems; increase cross-border cooperation.

Agriculture and water: prioritise naturally climate-resilient crops, soil and water conservation and sustainable irrigation; ensure fair water allocation and prioritise essential needs and ecosystems.

Floods and landslides: invest in flood management and restore ecosystems that

retain water and stabilise landscapes and urban spaces.

Adaptation has limits: when ecosystems collapse, people are forced to move. Migration can be an adaptation strategy when people have resources and choices, but when systems fail it becomes a necessity. Europe must prepare for internal displacement and increasing migration from neighbouring regions.

Demands

Therefore, as European Greens, we demand:

- Binding EU adaptation targets and infrastructure stress tests against severe scenarios
- Universal protection from extreme heat, including cooling spaces, drinking water, shade and heat health plans
- Enforceable temperature thresholds and adapted conditions for workers and children
- Affordable insurance and public risk pooling that rewards risk reduction
- Huge investment in climate-resilient public infrastructure, including cooling systems in buildings and schools, flood protection, healthcare and water systems
- Ecosystem restoration as adaptation infrastructure, preventing maladaptation and green gentrification
- Stronger European civil protection and wildfire prevention through public funding, preparedness and cross-border cooperation
- Support for climate-resilient livelihoods, such as agriculture, forestry, tourism, reinforcing agricultural methods and traditional knowledge of shared land use
- Solidarity-based adaptation finance prioritising the most exposed communities and closing the international finance gap

76 • Preparation for climate displacement, protecting legal mobility, the right to
77 seek protection and European solidarity

78 • Accelerated mitigation alongside adaptation. Every fraction of a degree
79 avoided reduces adaptation needs, losses and risks to peace and stability.

80 [CF1]Public?

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Title: **Defending the Right to Protest**

Tabled by: Green Party of England and Wales

1 The right to protest is a cornerstone of democracy. It is the means by which
2 ordinary people speak truth to power, challenge injustice, and demand
3 accountability. Yet worldwide, governments increasingly restrict freedom of
4 expression and peaceful assembly, undermining people's ability to freely
5 protest.

6 Over the past decade, more than two-thirds of the world's population (5.6
7 billion people across 77 countries) have seen their freedom of expression
8 curtailed, while only 4% (300 million across 15 countries) have seen it
9 improved. This means that for every one person who has gained greater freedom of
10 expression, nineteen have seen that freedom diminished.

11 The European Green Party believes that freedom of expression and peaceful
12 assembly are among the most fundamental rights in any democratic society.
13 Freedom of expression allows people to communicate ideas and opinions, while
14 freedom of assembly enables them to express those views collectively, publicly,
15 and with greater political impact. Together, they form the foundation of the
16 right to protest.

17 **In defence of the right to protest across Europe, and reaffirming its 2020**
18 **Resolution on the Right to Protest, the Members of the European Green Party**
19 **agree that:**

- 20 1. Everyone should have the right to freedom of expression and assembly,
21 regardless of nationality or immigration status.

2. These rights protect the freedom to organise and participate in protests, demonstrations, rallies, strikes, vigils, and pickets, without fear of government interference, censorship, or retaliation.
3. They include the freedom to engage in provocative, critical, offensive, or even disturbing speech, as well as peaceful acts of civil disobedience (sit-ins, occupations, media stunts, protest camps, and acts of non-cooperation) that may breach domestic law.
4. This means that forms of expression should not be criminalised solely because they are controversial, offensive, shocking, or unpopular.
5. Expression that is gratuitously offensive, promotes hatred or violence based on intolerance, or violates the fundamental rights and freedoms of others does not enjoy protection.
6. Restrictions on protests must always be justifiable under international human rights law, starting with the state's obligation *not* to interfere with the right.
7. The ability to protest is a right, not a privilege.
8. Restrictions must never stifle peaceful assemblies and should be imposed only if proportionate, necessary, and the least restrictive means of protecting national security, public safety, public health, or others' rights and freedoms.
9. Dispersal powers or force should be limited to situations where they are strictly necessary, proportionate to a legitimate public order objective, and used only as a last resort when an assembly becomes violent or poses a severe and imminent risk.
10. The use of facial recognition surveillance technology in policing protests is incompatible with human rights and undermines privacy rights.
11. Academic institutions should foster open, respectful debate free from censorship, intimidation, discrimination, and undue interference with lawful expression, research, protest, and discussion.

51 12. A free and pluralistic media is essential to informed democratic
52 participation.

53 13. Journalists should be able to cover demonstrations freely, without fear of
54 intimidation, violence, or prosecution.

Demands

55 **Accordingly, the European Green Party and its Member Parties support the**
56 **following actions:**

- 57 1. Ensuring the right to protest remains accessible, safe and free from
58 intimidation for all;
- 59 2. Promoting dialogue, mutual understanding, and intercultural exchange in
60 public life, and meaningful participation of civil society organisations
61 in public debate;
- 62 3. Opposing government interference in media or broadcasting that suppresses
63 dissent;
- 64 4. Statutorily recognising civil disobedience as a legitimate form of
65 democratic participation and political expression at local and European
66 levels;
- 67 5. Encouraging Green leaders to observe or participate in protests and acts
68 of civil disobedience;
- 69 6. Safeguarding pluralism, promoting respectful debate and exchange within
70 the Party, and protecting the right of Members to express lawful dissent
71 amongst its membership in line with the EGP Charter;
- 72 7. Establishing a European legal framework on the right to protest, with
73 effective sanctions for states' non-compliance, and broadened application
74 of Article 4(1) of the Rule of Law Conditionality Mechanism to address
75 persistent violations;
- 76 8. Applying the Rabat Plan of Action's six-part threshold test to hate speech

77 or incitement;

78 9. Guaranteeing independent judicial oversight of protest restrictions and
79 effective legal remedies for rights violations;

80 10. Using international guidance on policing protests, including the UN's
81 Model Protocol for Law Enforcement Officials to Promote and Protect Human
82 Rights in the Context of Peaceful Protests;

83 11. Opposing blanket prohibitions on protests near public institutions or
84 government buildings, except where narrowly tailored, evidence-based, and
85 necessary to address a specific, immediate threat to public safety;

86 12. Opposing the use of excessive criminal penalties and the discriminatory
87 application of terrorism-related provisions to punish, deter, or suppress
88 protests and non-violent direct action;

89 13. Condemning the use of facial recognition technology, mass surveillance,
90 arbitrary detention, excessive force or brutality, and militarised
91 violence against non-violent demonstrators; and

92 14. Rejecting authoritarianism and fascism, and standing in solidarity with
93 political prisoners, human rights defenders, and peaceful protesters
94 worldwide.

Background

Freedom of Expression

Freedom of expression is protected under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). These provisions guarantee the right to hold opinions without interference and the freedom to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers and through any medium. Freedom of expression protects the communication and exchange of ideas, opinions, information, and beliefs. Its protection extends to speech communicated verbally, in writing, through artistic expression, symbolic acts, protest, and other forms of communication.

Freedom of expression does not exist in isolation. Alongside Article 19 are important protections

for opinion, belief, privacy, political participation, and minority rights in Articles 18, 17, 25, and 27 of the ICCPR. Freedom of opinion and expression underpins the full enjoyment of a wide range of other human rights.

The European Court of Human Rights has repeatedly affirmed that pluralism, tolerance, and broadmindedness are fundamental characteristics of democracy and that restrictions on expression must therefore be interpreted narrowly. In *Handyside v United Kingdom*, the Court described freedom of expression as "one of the essential foundations of such a society, one of the basic conditions for its progress and for the development of every man." The Court further clarified that the right protects not only ideas that are favourably received or regarded as inoffensive, but also those that offend, shock, or disturb, recognising that pluralism and tolerance are indispensable characteristics of a democratic society. Therefore, freedom of expression protects robust public debate about religion, ideology, morality, and culture, including views that others may consider controversial, offensive, or deeply disagreeable.

This protection also extends to criticism of religions, religious institutions, and religious beliefs. While Article 9 ECHR protects freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, the Court has recognised that those who choose to manifest religious beliefs in public life cannot reasonably expect immunity from criticism or opposing viewpoints. In *Otto-Preminger-Institut v Austria*, the Court found that freedom of belief includes the freedom to question, reject, challenge, or criticise religious doctrines. Prohibiting criticism of religious beliefs would substantially undermine the ability to receive, impart, and debate both religious and non-religious ideas.

Importantly, not all offensive expression is protected. Speech that is gratuitously offensive, incites hatred and violence based on intolerance, or infringes on others' fundamental freedoms is not protected (see Art. 20, ICCPR; *Otto-Preminger-Institut v Austria*, at [49]; *Wingrove v United Kingdom*, at [52]; *Gündüz v Turkey* (2003) 41 E.H.R.R. 5, at [37]; *Giniewski v France* (2007) 45 E.H.R.R. 589, at [43]). The [Rabat Plan of Action on the prohibition of advocacy of national, racial or religious hatred that constitutes incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence](#) contains a six-part threshold test for forms of speech that are prohibited under criminal law, considering: 1) the context of incitement to hatred, 2) the speaker, 3) intent, 4) content, 5) extent of the speech, and 6) likelihood of causing harm. The UN recommends applying this test when assessing whether a particular expression reaches the prohibited threshold under Article 20(2) of the ICCPR.

Freedom of Assembly

The right to peaceful assembly is recognised across international and regional human rights instruments. Article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) provides that "the right of peaceful assembly shall be recognised." Similar protections are found in Article

20(1) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Additional protections relating to participation in assemblies appear in specialised human rights treaties, including Article 15 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 5(d)(ix) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and Article 8 of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee has described peaceful assembly as a cornerstone of democratic participation. In General Comment No. 37, it stated:

"The fundamental human right of peaceful assembly enables individuals to express themselves collectively and to participate in shaping their societies. The right of peaceful assembly is important in its own right, as it protects the ability of people to exercise individual autonomy in solidarity with others. Together with other related rights, it also constitutes the very foundation of a system of participatory governance based on democracy, human rights, the rule of law and pluralism."

The right belongs to everyone. It is not limited to citizens. Foreign nationals, migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, and undocumented individuals are all entitled to enjoy the protection of the right to peaceful assembly without discrimination. The right protects the non-violent gathering of people for specific purposes, most commonly expressive, political, social, cultural, or religious ones. Although assemblies are collective in nature, the right remains an individual human right exercised in association with others. Its protection extends to demonstrations, marches, rallies, vigils, public meetings, strikes, and certain forms of civil disobedience, provided they remain peaceful.

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Yes

Yes

Supporters

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Title: **Green Data Centres for Europe: Climate-Safe and Sovereign**

Tabled by: Demokratska Obnova na Makedonija

Introduction

Europe needs its own digital capacity – the foundation of a digitally enabled society, a competitive economy and a functioning government. Digital capacity also means the power to shape artificial intelligence itself, rather than leaving it to Big Tech and authoritarian governments. However, the current data-centre expansion is pressuring Europe's energy, water and land, while a few US hyperscalers are dominating the cloud market and seizing the value it creates. The European Green Party calls for binding rules to keep Europe's digital infrastructure within environmental and resource limits, alongside equal requirements across EU Member States and candidate countries. Transparency, data protection and democratic oversight must be core principles. Executed correctly, Europe's digital infrastructure can become a competitive advantage.

Body

Data centres are among the largest new loads Europe will connect this decade. On their current path, they risk straining grids, depleting water resources and generating noise and waste, while their tax revenues and economic benefits often flow elsewhere. They create relatively few local jobs compared with their energy demand. Europe needs digital infrastructure, but not at the expense of communities and ecosystems or by exacerbating water stress or grid constraints.

Across Europe, procedural accelerations and insufficient safeguards are

repeating a familiar pattern. Changes to urban-planning and construction legislation adopted in June 2026 in North Macedonia – an EU candidate country – have accelerated procedures for data-centre and related energy infrastructure projects, while key criteria and safeguards remain insufficiently defined. Plans for a national data centre and a proposed commercial project in Pehčevo have raised questions about transparency, investment criteria and public participation. Where communities are confronted with such projects without information or a say, emergency brakes follow, as moratoria in Scotland and the Amsterdam region show.

The EU has begun building a framework for transparency and monitoring, but reporting and non-binding commitments are not enough. Missing are common minimum requirements, effective monitoring and fair allocation of the costs of infrastructure and environmental impacts.

Europe does not have to choose between digitalisation and climate: a green data-centre and AI strategy can set it apart from the United States, which is turning to gas turbines, and China, where coal still dominates. Its first building block is flexibility: data centres that shift non-urgent workloads to hours of surplus wind and solar and use their batteries to support the grid stop competing with households and industry for scarce grid capacity and can connect sooner – without making electricity more expensive for everyone else. Its second is sovereignty: data centres open to foreign authorities do not become European by sitting on European soil – they must be built, owned and run by Europeans, with strong data protection and cybersecurity.

Demands

The European Green Party calls for:

- Binding European minimum standards for large data centres on energy, water and resource efficiency, including useful waste-heat utilisation benefiting local communities, within a Paris-aligned carbon budget.
- Data-centre operators must cover their fair share of the costs for grid reinforcement, additional renewable capacity and required water infrastructure.

- Grid access and permits conditional on efficiency, flexibility, storage, demand response and clean power, demonstrated through additional renewable or carbon-free capacity beyond existing supply, without displacing existing industries and other grid users, with priority connection for flexible data centres.
- Prioritising the siting of new data centres in regions with surplus renewable power and spare grid capacity, with on-site gas permitted only as transitional, hydrogen-ready back-up under a binding conversion path.
- A European water hierarchy prioritising recycled and reclaimed water for cooling, with restrictions on drinking-water use.
- Binding assessments of energy, water, grid, biodiversity, noise and cumulative impacts, including drought and heatwave risks.
- Public facility-level reporting of electricity, peak demand, water, emissions, flexibility, waste-heat recovery, electronic waste and compute utilisation, with an end to confidentiality carve-outs in the Energy Efficiency Directive (EED) reporting.
- Transparent conditions for public support, permitting and infrastructure access – tied to clean power and flexibility - without preferential treatment for Big Tech or other investors, ensuring a level playing field where the greenest and cheapest options win and value stays in Europe, and accountable rules for data storage and protection.
- A transparent, participatory European framework ensuring community involvement, expert input and public access to key project information.
- The same core European safeguards in EU candidate countries, including North Macedonia, so that weaker rules do not attract unsustainable investment.

Background

- **Amazon, Microsoft and Google** jointly hold ~70% of the European cloud market; the European share halved from 29% (2017) to ~15% (2024). The US CLOUD Act and FISA

Section 702 make data held by US-controlled providers presumptively reachable by US authorities regardless of storage location.

<https://www.acm.nl/system/files/documents/marktstudie-clouddiensten.pdf>

<https://www.srgresearch.com/articles/european-cloud-providers-local-market-share-now-holds-steady-at-15><https://cms.law/en/bel/legal-updates/white-paper-demystifying-the-debate-on-the-us-cloud-act-vs-european-uk-data-sovereignty-in-the-context-of-cloud-services>

- **Cloud and AI Development Act (CADA) tripling target:** the proposed act aims to triple EU data-centre capacity within five to seven years, including faster permits for projects in data-centre acceleration zones. <https://oeil.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/en/document-summary?id=1903654>
- **Cooling systems and back-up generators** for data centres cause local nuisance, including significant noise pollution. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2772985025000262>
- **Data centres produce large volumes of electronic waste**, especially considering the rapid generational turnover of hardware needed for AI computing (e.g. graphic cards); e-waste is often exported to Eastern and Southeastern European countries. https://wiki.ban.org/images/1/16/AI_Waste_Wave_Part_1.pdf<https://china-cee.eu/2025/11/28/north-macedonia-monthly-briefing-europes-wasteland-how-macedonia-became-one-of-the-dumping-grounds-of-the-continent/>
- **EED dashboard (European Commission)** reports 18.5 TWh for the EU in 2024, against credible independent estimates of 60–100 TWh; data centres account for 4.6% of Dutch and 23% of Irish electricity consumption; Dublin grid operators have paused new data-centre connections until 2028. https://dashboard.tech.ec.europa.eu/qs_digit_dashboard_mt/public/sense/app-/940a61c3-bcfe-47d6-a786-25d93aa63b85/sheet/ZLWpJa/state/analysis/bookmark/381456a5-1044-4047-92f5-671be7ad92c4<https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/ireland-data-center-construction-market><https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2025/51/data-centres-consume-4-6-percent-of-the-netherlands-electricity><https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-dcmec/datacentresmeteredelectricityconsumption2025/>

- **EED reporting thresholds:** the Directive requires reporting from data centres with at least 500 kW installed IT power; large data centres are 2–10 MW, very large exceed 10 MW (EED / Delegated Regulation (EU) 2024/1364). https://energy.ec.europa.eu/topics/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-targets-directive-and-rules/energy-efficiency-directive_en
- **Flexibility (Duke University, 2025):** 76 GW of new load, about 10% of US peak demand, could be integrated with an average annual curtailment rate of 0.25% – corresponding to around 85 hours of curtailment a year. <https://nicholasinstitute.duke.edu/publications/rethinking-load-growth>
- **Fossil lock-in (IEA 2025):** natural gas expands by 175 TWh to meet growing data-centre demand, notably in the US. <https://www.iea.org/reports/energy-and-ai/executive-summary>
- **Global data-centre electricity consumption** was 416 TWh in 2024; electricity-related emissions could grow 2.5 times by 2030 in a high-growth scenario; UNEP's 2025 Emissions Gap Report identifies data centres as the fastest-growing source of emissions globally. <https://www.iea.org/reports/energy-and-ai/executive-summary>
<https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2025>
- **IEA update (2026):** global data-centre electricity demand is set to nearly double from 485 TWh in 2025 to 950 TWh by 2030; demand from AI-focused data centres rose by 50% in 2025 alone; orders for gas turbines to power data centres rose 70% in 2025. <https://www.iea.org/reports/key-questions-on-energy-and-ai/executive-summary>
- **Moratoria or emergency brakes** on data-centre projects have either been enacted or backed in Scotland (SNP), New York (statewide, 2026), and Amsterdam (municipal). <https://www.datacenterdynamics.com/en/news/scotland-data-center-moratorium/>
<https://www.governor.ny.gov/news/first-statewide-moratorium-new-hyperscale-data-centers-launched-governor-kathy-hochul><https://nltimes.nl/2025/04/18/amsterdam-allowing-data-centers-municipality>
- **North Macedonia:** as of June 2026 legislative changes accelerated data-centre project procedures, while transparency, investment-screening and participation criteria remain

insufficiently defined (National Data Centre; Pehčevo project).

<https://ddklaw.com.mk/north-macedonia-strengthens-legal-framework-for-data-centre-development/?lang=en><https://a1on.mk/macedonia/sovetot-na-opshtina-pehchevo-ja-otfrli-inicijativata-za-izgradba-na-data-centar/><https://mactel.com.au/en/The-Pehcevo-Municipality-Council-voted-in-favor/>

- **US AI build-out:** heavily debt-financed (AI capex projected at ~\$5.5tn by 2030), with securitised data-centre debt and accelerated index-fund inclusion transmitting valuation risk to European savings and pensions. <https://www.stlouisfed.org/on-the-economy/2026/jan/tracking-ai-contribution-gdp-growth>

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