



Warsaw, April 12, 2018

**President Jean-Claude Juncker**  
European Commission  
Brussels, Belgium

Dear President Juncker,

As the Commission prepares to present its proposal for the next Multiannual Financial Framework in early May, we call on you on behalf of Poland's More than Energy movement to make the future Cohesion Policy an effective tool for climate, sustainability and community power.

More than Energy is an alliance of more than 150 actors including four regions of Poland, several dozen municipalities and municipal associations, 16 green business associations and multiple civil society organizations, think tanks and academic institutions. Since 2015, we have been advocating for the development of renewables, energy efficiency and community power in Poland.<sup>1</sup>

Our country has been the greatest beneficiary of Cohesion Policy, which we hope will continue to support sustainable development and the people's quality of life throughout Europe.

However, with the changes and challenges that Europe is facing, Cohesion Policy needs to change, too, in order to fully realise its potential. Its interventions need to be focused on areas where they matter most. Tackling climate change, speeding up the energy transition and empowering energy citizens are such areas.

Writing from a country which has been struggling to transform its energy sector, we call on the Commission to make sure the next MFF proposal significantly increases the share of funds dedicated to climate action. To adequately address the challenges and speed up the energy transition, **climate spending should account for at least 40% of the next EU budget.**

Moreover, **the entire budget should be climate- and sustainability-proofed** to prevent EU money from supporting investments that are detrimental to climate and the natural environment and undermine progress achieved thanks to the climate-dedicated part of the budget.

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<sup>1</sup> [Więcej niż Energia](#)

While offering more money for climate action, the next MFF should also **introduce new *ex ante* conditionalities to ensure that regulatory barriers artificially holding back the energy transition are removed.**

And finally, the people and local communities need to be given more say in deciding how the money is spent. To this end, **the Partnership Principle needs to be significantly strengthened and made enforceable** in the next MFF.

Poland will need massive investments in energy efficiency and renewables to bring its energy transition up to speed, meet its climate commitments and tackle its air quality crisis. Increased climate spending under the Cohesion Policy has an essential role to play here.

However, greater financial allocations alone will not achieve the task without smart ideas and the human energy needed to make them reality. Poles overwhelmingly support the development of renewables, many are willing to invest in prosumer micro-installations and there is massive interest in local community energy projects. This potential, however, is held back by an unfavourable regulatory framework which discourages smaller-scale, distributed and community-led green energy projects. To unleash it, increased climate spending should go hand in hand with *ex ante* conditionalities regarding the removal of regulatory barriers that hinder the development of renewables and community energy.

Making the most of this potential will also require changes to the Partnership Principle, which in its current form which gives social partners only very limited influence on the spending of EU funds.<sup>2</sup> The Partnership Principle should be strengthened and made enforceable to give social partners real influence on the directions of spending and enable smaller, community-led energy projects to benefit from EU funds on an equal footing with big investments. A stronger Partnership Principle would help unlock the transformative potential of prosumer and community energy, but its impact would go way beyond the domain of energy. It would also strengthen democracy by giving more power to the people and buttress European values by making empowered citizens essential actors in the attainment of Europe's climate objectives, thus increasing the people's sense of ownership of the European project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Your sincerely,



Joanna Furmaga

President

The Alliance of Associations Polish Green Network

On behalf of

More Than Energy movement

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<sup>2</sup> [EU funds in central and eastern Europe: 'partnership principle' still not translating to 'partnership in practice'](#)