

29 October 2020

Mr David Sassoli - President of the European Parliament
Mr Charles Michel - President of the European Council
Ms Ursula von der Leyen - President of the European Commission

Concerning: *Letter from European Mayors on the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility*

Dear President Sassoli,
Dear President Michel,
Dear President von der Leyen,

The coronavirus crisis and the pressing need in its wake for a sound and green economic recovery poses a severe challenge to Europe that requires the full commitment of all levels of government. On the upside, it also gives us a unique opportunity to address the root causes of our deteriorating environment and public health. With this letter we intend to add the voice of cities to this most crucial discussion on how to best allocate the EU's Recovery and Resilience Facility.

We are driven in our efforts by the recognition that not only have cities been disproportionately impacted by the crisis, but they are also uniquely placed to address the immediate and long-term needs of their citizens. With relatively small-scale projects that target local economies, enhance resilience and drive green recovery, cities can create pathways that work in synergy to achieve Europe's strategic objectives. If allowed to roll out bold city-level recovery measures, consistent with the aims of the RRF and financed thereof, cities can build back Europe better.

Therefore, we urge the European institutions to recognize municipalities as key allies in our joint fight for a resilient future. First, we urge the EU to mandate member state governments to better engage cities when shaping country-level recovery plans. Second, we find it crucial that the EU opens up parts of the Recovery and Resilience Fund directly to local governments. With regards to the latter, we specifically urge the European institutions to adopt the proposed amendment in the European Parliament to earmark at least 10% of the RRF to the local level. We note that a truly coherent needs-based mechanism would require an even higher percentage than 10%, and call the attention of EU institutions to the need to accelerate funding disbursement in order to maximize effectiveness.

Novel approaches can help us overcome crises of this magnitude. In direct contact with populations and with first-hand knowledge of how to advance a sustainable recovery on the ground, cities are adamant to rise to the challenge and together build a better future than the past we are leaving behind.

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We note with appreciation that several amendment proposals put forward to this end have already been backed and adopted by the Budgetary Control Committee (CONT) of the European Parliament, paving the way for further support in the leading Budgetary and Economic Committees, as well as on the plenary level.

We feel that European institutions are on the right path to tackle the crisis with wisdom and courage. We wish they would also urgently realize the immense potential of local governments in building a strong, green and just Europe and accept the strategic alliance they now offer.

Sincerely yours,

Ada Colau
Mayor of Barcelona

Matúš Vallo
Mayor of Bratislava

Gergely Karácsony
Mayor of Budapest

Belit Onay
Mayor of Hannover

Fernando Medina
Mayor of Lisbon

Giuseppe Sala
Mayor of Milan

Anne Hidalgo
Mayor of Paris

Zdeněk Hřib
Mayor of Prague

Rafał Trzaskowski
Mayor of Warsaw

** It will be also sent with a detailed email to the rapporteurs of the RRF file and to the members of ECONOMY and BUDGET committees of the European Parliament*