

To: Mr Piotr Serafin, European Commissioner for Budget, Anti-Fraud and Public Administration,

To: Ministries of Finance of EU countries

To: European Parliament Committee on Budgets

Cc:

Ms. Teresa Ribera, Executive Vice-President for Clean, Just and Competitive Transition

Mr. Wopke Hoekstra, Commissioner for Climate, Net Zero and Clean Growth

Mr. Dan Jørgensen, Commissioner for Energy and Housing

Ms. Hadja Lahbib, Commissioner for Equality, Preparedness and Crisis Management

Ms. Roxana Mînzatu, Executive Vice-President for Social Rights and Skills, Quality Jobs and Preparedness

Mr. Raffaele Fitto, Executive Vice-President for Cohesion and Reforms

Open letter to EU budget negotiators: We need green investment for Europe's security

Monday, 31 March 2025

Dear Commissioner Piotr Serafin, dear Finance Ministers, dear Members of the European Parliament,

Events of recent weeks have brought the need for Europe to consolidate and strengthen its defences into sharp focus.

The announcement by Commission President Von der Leyen that the EU would trigger an "escape clause" on its fiscal rules to allow for greater defence spending only served to emphasise the extraordinary times in which we now live.

As security and energy experts, we say that energy policy is an essential part of Europe's future security and resilience.

Long-term stability relies not only on military strength but also on reducing our dependency on volatile energy supplies.

Recent EU progress, such as the Baltic states switching away from the Russian grid, are steps in the right direction.

But the EU's security must also be strengthened by producing renewable energy domestically, insulating Europe from the volatility of global fossil fuel markets and the strategic risks of dependency on fuels from external states.

Europe has considerable resources in wind, wave, and solar power. [Analysis](#) shows that clean technologies and renewables could replace two-thirds of Russian gas imports by 2025, saving €60 billion in fossil fuel imports by 2030, money that can be spent on further boosting domestic production across the union - offering both fiscal and strategic advantages.

Between 2019 and 2023, wind and solar power generation in the EU [grew by 46%](#), displacing a fifth of the bloc's fossil fuel generation. By 2022, renewable energy accounted for [43% of total EU energy production](#). Looking globally, investment in clean energy technologies and infrastructure is expected to reach \$2 trillion in 2024—nearly [double the \\$1 trillion](#) projected for fossil fuels.

While Europe plans for the future, we should remember climate change in itself is a driver of instability that threatens peace. According to the [Institute for Economics and Peace](#), over 1 billion people are under threat of being displaced by 2050 due to environmental change, conflict and civil unrest.

Investing in renewables and energy efficiency not only bolsters our geopolitical standing but also reduces dependence on unstable relationships. Cooperation on clean energy can additionally strengthen alliances with low- and middle-income countries in the European neighbourhood, fostering shared regional prosperity and addressing global climate challenges.

Acceleration of the green transition is an essential element of Europe's future strategic autonomy.

We urge you to adopt a holistic approach to security during upcoming discussions of the Multiannual Financial Framework. It is not a question of choosing between defence or green energy spending — both are essential and mutually reinforcing. Neglecting one undermines the other.

By prioritising domestic renewable energy production and development in infrastructure such as electricity grids, fostering resilience against climate impacts, and maintaining strong international partnerships, the EU can secure a future where peace and stability are built on a sustainable, shock-proof foundation.

Sincerely,

Mats Engström, Senior Policy Fellow, European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR)

Richard Youngs, Senior Fellow, Carnegie Europe

Victor De Decker, Research Fellow, Egmont Institute

Genevieve Pons, Head of Brussels branch, Jacques Delors Institute

Prof. Ben Tonra, MRIA, UCD School of Politics and International Relations (SPIRE)

Sylvie Matelly, Executive Director, Jacques Delors Institute

Thijs van de Graaf, Energy Fellow, the Brussels Institute for Geopolitics

Nick Mabey, Chief Executive, E3G