

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002791/25
to the Commission
Markus Buchheit (ESN)
(9 July 2025)**

Subject: Are EU funds being used to promote a progressive ideological agenda?

Numerous EU funding programmes, including Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, and the Cohesion Fund, now systematically include ideological criteria related to ‘diversity,’ ‘gender equality,’ ‘LGBTIQ+ inclusion’, or ‘climate justice.’

These conditions often appear in grant application guidelines, project evaluations, and reporting obligations. While the stated aim is to promote equality and sustainability, in practice they risk discriminating against institutions and applicants who do not adhere to a specific ideological worldview.

Public funds should serve the general interest of all EU citizens, not act as instruments for social re-engineering.

1. Can the Commission explain why political and ideological concepts such as ‘gender mainstreaming,’ ‘intersectionality,’ or ‘climate justice’ are increasingly used as evaluation criteria in EU-funded programmes?
2. What safeguards exist to ensure that EU citizens, institutions, or associations that do not endorse progressive ideologies are not excluded from funding opportunities?
3. How does the Commission justify the use of taxpayers’ money to promote specific ideological agendas instead of maintaining strict political and ideological neutrality in public funding?

Submitted: 9.7.2025

**Answer given by Mr Serafin on behalf of the European Commission
(1 September 2025)**

The Commission is bound by the EU Treaties, which enshrine values of equality and non-discrimination. The Commission implements EU interventions and funding activities accordingly.

The Interinstitutional Agreement between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on the Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027 ⁽¹⁾ sets expenditure targets for climate and biodiversity, and tracks expenditure supporting gender equality.

It also requires strengthening the assessment of gender equality. Currently, sectoral regulations include objectives related to climate action and gender equality.

For the next MFF, Article 33 of the Financial Regulation ⁽²⁾ requires that programmes and activities be implemented in line with the principle of gender equality, and that gender-disaggregated data be collected, where appropriate.

Under the Financial Regulation, the award of EU funds is subject to respecting the legal requirements of equal treatment, transparency and non-discrimination ⁽³⁾.

There is no requirement that a recipient of EU funding endorses any ideology. Under Article 138 of the Financial Regulation, applicants are excluded from participating in award procedures or from implementing EU funds if they are found guilty of grave professional misconduct, which includes having engaged in incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence against a group of persons or a member of a group or activities that are contrary to the values under Article 2 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union ⁽⁴⁾.

Specific award criteria are set to assess the quality of the proposals in line with the objectives and priorities of the relevant EU programmes.

⁽¹⁾ [https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020Q1222\(01\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32020Q1222(01)).

⁽²⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:L_202402509.

⁽³⁾ See Article 163 of the Financial Regulation for procurement and Article 191 of the Financial Regulation for grants.

⁽⁴⁾ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cellar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_2&format=PDF.