

Invitation

Half-day conference

Financing Europe's Future: How to mobilise more strategic investment?

Wednesday, 14 January 2025 (14.00 - 17.15)

14-16 Rue du Trône, 1000 Brussels

The European Policy Centre (EPC) is pleased to invite you to this half-day conference which marks the end of the EPC's project on EU strategic investments. The project involved a taskforce of policymakers, experts and stakeholders and produced the report ['From mission polity to mission economy: Making the EU a strategic investment power'](#)¹.

Europe faces a chronic investment shortfall that cuts across its economic, technological, climate, social, and security priorities. The ECB estimates that the EU must mobilise around €1.2 trillion in additional investment each year for its green, digital, and defence transitions alone.

With the Recovery and Resilience Facility expiring in 2026, limited fiscal space in Member States, and insufficient private investment, bridging this gap will require a more targeted and efficient use of public funds and a stronger capacity to leverage private capital.

In July 2025, the European Commission presented an ambitious proposal for a reformed Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) worth nearly €2 trillion, featuring a new €451 billion European Competitiveness Fund. To complement this, Commission President Ursula von der Leyen has proposed a Scale-up Europe Fund to channel equity financing into breakthrough innovation and fast-growing European companies.

At the same time, global capital markets are undergoing a profound realignment. The volatility of US economic policy, the weakening of rules-based institutions, and the erosion of the "Washington consensus" are reshaping global investment flows. With the right reforms, the EU could seize this moment—offering a model built on stability, openness, and high-quality investment opportunities.

The central question at this conference will therefore be how to equip the EU with sufficient resources and effective instruments to mobilise investment in strategic areas, while ensuring a supportive regulatory environment and market infrastructure that enhance Europe's

¹ Also see the Financial Times article ["The EU's budget is setting it up for geopolitical marginalisation"](#)

attractiveness. The event will delve into the current political debate around the MFF and explore possible ways forward for a more impactful EU budget and market environment.

Agenda

14:00 - 14:05 Welcoming remarks:

- **Fabian Zuleeg**, CEO and Chief Economist, European Policy Centre

14:05 - 14:15 Opening keynote:

- **Maive Rute**, Deputy Director General, DG GROW

14:15 - 15:30 Panel 1: Towards the next MFF: How can the EU mobilise more investment for strategic goals?

- **Maive Rute**, Deputy Director General, DG GROW
- **Sophie Barbier**, Director European Affairs Division, Caisse des Dépôts et Consignations
- **Rasmus Nordqvist**, MEP, Greens, European Parliament
- **Cornel Ban**, Associate Professor, Copenhagen Business School
- **Philipp Lausberg**, Senior Policy Analyst, European Policy Centre

Moderated by Georg Riekeles, Associate Director, European Policy Centre

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee break

16:00 - 17:15 Panel 2: From savings to scale-ups: Unlocking Europe's market potential for strategic investment

- **Merete Clausen**, Deputy Chief Executive, European Investment Fund
- **Lauro Panella**, Member of Cabinet of Commissioner Albuquerque
- **Carey Evans**, Managing Director, Global Public Policy Group, BlackRock
- **Victor Englesson**, Partner and Head of Early Stage Technology, EQT
- **Georg Riekeles**, Associate Director, European Policy Centre

Moderated by Philipp Lausberg, Senior Policy Analyst, European Policy Centre