



### Commission statement on the LIFE Programme

Strasbourg, 1 April 2025

The [LIFE Programme](#), adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in 2021, plays a key role in implementing environmental, climate and energy legislation and policies. LIFE supports a wide range of beneficiaries in EU Member States, including private companies, local authorities, research foundations and civil society organisations.

The LIFE multiannual work programme 2025-27 provides the framework for its implementation for the years to come. The Commission followed the appropriate procedure for the preparation of and vote on the work programme in the LIFE Committee, consisting of Member States' representatives, which delivered a positive opinion.

Funding for NGOs is explicitly provided for in the LIFE Regulation, with the aim to improve governance of environmental, climate change and energy transition matters, including by enhancing stakeholder involvement at all levels, capacity-building, communication and awareness. The Commission remains fully committed to ensuring a healthy and vibrant civil society, also by supporting its functioning and its involvement in policy making.

At the same time, the Commission has recognised that in some cases work programmes submitted by the NGOs and annexed to the operating grant agreements contained specific advocacy actions and undue lobbying activities. The Commission has taken action to prevent such cases in the future and will take further measures to strengthen transparency and include appropriate safeguards. In particular:

- The Commission already published [guidance](#) on the type of activities that should not be included when receiving funding as part of policy and legislation development, implementation, monitoring and enforcement. The grants should comply with the LIFE objectives and support the participation of civil society in European policy-making and democratic debate, while avoiding lobbying that targets specific policies or MEPs. This guidance is applicable to all EU funding and is already implemented by all Commission services and relevant agencies.
- In the multiannual work-programme 2025-2027, the Commission has included further safeguards to ensure that operating grants do not require specific and detailed activities that directly target Union institutions or their staff or members, and that clarify that beneficiaries retain full responsibility for their views and for presenting these views to Union institutions. The Commission is working closely with the Court of Auditors – which is currently finalising its recommendations on how to further improve the transparency of NGO funding in the implementation of EU funding programmes – including through appropriate mechanisms.
- The Commission will review the transparency arrangements for beneficiaries of grants funded by the EU budget, including in relation to the disclosure requirements under the EU transparency register.
- The Commission is committed to ensure that the LIFE evaluation committee members are independent and free from conflicts of interest. It is mandatory for the members to sign declarations on absence of conflict of interest before engaging with the assessment of proposals, and mitigation measures are in place in case conflicts of interest are identified. CINEA will review the selection procedure for members of the LIFE evaluation committee and will implement any necessary steps to ensure full transparency.
- While working on a possible review, the MoU between CINEA and the Commission services responsible for LIFE will be implemented rigorously to ensure clarity in the respective responsibilities in the grant award procedure.

The Commission is committed to maintaining an open and collaborative dialogue with the European

Parliament and stands ready to provide further clarifications on any remaining issues.

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