

Warsaw / Sofia / Prague / Bucharest / Bratislava / Budapest, 5 October 2020

Igor Matovič

Prime Minister of the Slovak Republic

Námestie slobody 1

813 70 Bratislava

Slovak Republic

Dear Prime Minister,

With this appeal we would like to turn to you ahead of the European Council on 15-16 October that will be decisive for European climate ambition and the Green Recovery of our economies.

Especially due to a common history of the last decades, countries of Central and Eastern Europe face similar economic and environmental development challenges, such as the heritage of post-Socialist-era heavy industry collapse as well as the need for significant investments¹ to enable the structural transformations that are necessary to implement ambitious climate action in line with the Paris Agreement. Even if our countries currently respond differently to the COVID-19 crisis and to the European Green Deal initiative, the core interest of our societies is very similar. Over the past six months of the pandemic, hundreds of thousands of citizens, experts, academics, civil society actors and artists etc. have called for economic and social renewal along common human and European values, including climate awareness at national and European levels². With this appeal, we would like to reinforce these earlier initiatives and highlight the need to ensure that all spending under the EU budget, and the EU Cohesion Policy and Just Transition Fund in particular, needs to be climate-proof and boost the transition towards climate neutrality, in the interest of Central European societies and economies.

The next decade will be crucial for taking necessary action to avoid even worse climate change impacts in the near future, as climate change impacts are already hitting our region the hardest in Europe. Taking into account other ecological challenges (biodiversity loss, water shortages)

¹ Eg. more than 50% of public investment in Hungary came from Cohesion Policy funds:

<https://cohesiondata.ec.europa.eu/Other/-of-cohesion-policy-funding-in-public-investment-p/7bw6-2dw3>

² See: Annex 1

the need to develop comprehensive strategies on how to take care of people and the environment is more crucial and urgent than ever. Only by increasing climate action now, we may avoid the most severe extreme weather impacts such as substantial decline of crop yields, increased water distress, heat wave frequency and severity, expected to cause EU welfare losses of 175 billion EUR per year³. We are alarmingly off track with the Paris Agreement goal to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C, and are heading towards a world that is 3-4 degrees Celsius hotter than pre-industrial levels by the end of this century with current unsustainable policies. It is therefore crucial for the EU to fully act on its commitment under the Paris Agreement.

We cannot exit from the current economic crisis by deepening other existing ones. We need reforms and smart policy that can effectively address the multiple economic, health and climate crises at the same time. The Central European region cannot lag behind anymore in this process, and there is growing support for much more ambitious climate action and a more sustainable economic model in our countries - Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

Now, just before the European Council on 15-16 October that shall address enhancing the EU 2030 climate target, with Member States currently drafting their national Recovery and Resilience Plans as well as their EU funds spending plans, it is a pivotal moment for ambitious climate action both at European and national levels. This is why we, as representatives of the Central European civil society, businesses, cities and local and regional initiatives, and academia are calling on you to engage in a just and fair green economic recovery that would:

- Ensure that EU climate action is in line with the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement by supporting the increase of the EU climate target to at least 65% emission reductions, compared to 1990 levels;
- Make the European Green Deal, the EU budget and Member States' recovery and climate strategies ambitious and coherent by ensuring that EU taxpayers' money and investments are driving climate action as much as possible;

³ JRC (2020). Climate change impacts and adaptation in Europe (PESETA IV). <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/peseta-iv>

- Enhance social justice while combating the climate and other ecological crises we are facing;
- Be based on a deep re-thinking of our current economic model to make it compatible with climate protection and social justice, instead of quick fixes;
- Create quality, stable and healthy jobs and push for innovations to serve us and future generations, and build prospects for a sustainable future;
- Include public support for policies and projects that combine climate action with improving air, water and soil quality, public services such as health care and education;
- Develop energy efficiency measures and support for renewable energy sources, sustainable transportation and mobility, and focus on agriculture and food;
- Place European values, democracy and solidarity in its core; improve participation and transparency in designing overarching policies and particular solutions.

Comprehensive green recovery strategies and particular solutions are already there, developed and supported by various stakeholders and civil society. Recovery packages and financial stimulus measures that are being prepared by the European Union and Member States provide a unique opportunity to focus on the social and economic co-benefits of ambitious climate action, also for the Central European region.

Yours Sincerely,

Liliana Rástocká
Slovak Climate Initiative

Katarína Juríková
Greenpeace Slovakia

On behalf of over 180 organisations from Bulgaria, Czech Rep., Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia (see: Annex 2).

The appeal will be forwarded for notice to:

- Eduard Heger, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance
- Veronika Remišová, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Investment, Regional Development, and Innovation
- Richard Sulík, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for the Economy
- Ján Budaj, Minister of the Environment
- Tomáš Valášek, Chairman of the Committee on European Affairs, National Council of the Slovak Republic
- Frans Timmermans, First Executive Vice-President of the European Commission
- Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission
- David Maria Sassoli, President of the European Parliament
- Charles Michel, President of the European Council
- Angela Merkel, on behalf of the German EU Council presidency

The same letter is also being sent to the Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borisov, Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš, Romanian Prime Minister Ludovic Orban, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán.

Annex 1

Selected green recovery initiatives:

A. Europe

- “Recovering Better” briefing, E3G: <https://www.e3g.org/publications/briefing-summary-recovering-better-a-green-equitable-and-resilient-recovery/>
- “New Deal for Nature and People”, WWF: <https://explore.panda.org/newdeal>
- Joint statement of the Members of the European Council: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/43076/26-vc-euco-statement-en.pdf>
- Green 10 Letter: <https://green10.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/G10-letter-to-VDL-MFF-2021-27-and-EU-recovery-fund-May20.pdf>, <http://www.foeeurope.org/Green10-million-people-green-healthy-just-recovery>

B. Bulgaria

- Open letter by "Coalition for Green Restart", led by Greenpeace Bulgaria, WWF Bulgaria, MOVE.BG and the Institute of Circular Economics: <https://move.bg/green-restart-article-eng>

C. Czech Republic

- Czech Climate Coalition’s statement: <https://klimatickakoalice.cz/pro-media/aktuality/stanovisko-klimaticke-koalice-a-zeleneho-kruhu-k-vychodiskum-z-koronavirove-pandemie>

D. Hungary

- “A life-affirming society and economy” petition, Friends of the Earth Hungary: <https://mtvsz.hu/a-life-affirming-society-and-economy-petition>

E. Poland

- “Time for Restart”: <https://www.czasnarestart.pl/#time-for-restart>
- Polish Climate Coalition’s statement: <http://www.koaliciaklimatyczna.org/stanowisko-koalicji-klimatycznej-w-sprawie-odpowiedzi-na-nakladajace-sie-kryzysy-klimatyczny-zdrowotny-i-gospodarczy>

F. Romania

- “Tomorrow is decided today”: <https://mainesedecideazi.ro>

G. Slovakia

- Green Restart Initiative: <https://zelenyrestart.sk/>
- Online campaign and petition "Clima needs you": <https://www.klimatapotrebuje.sk/>

Annex 2

List of Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, Polish, Romanian, and Slovak signatories of the appeal to Central Eastern European Prime Ministers ahead of the EUCO 15/16 October 2020

Slovakia / Slovensko:

1. Academia Istropolitana Nova / Academia Istropolitana Nova
2. ASPECT / ASPEKT
3. Blue Lemons s.r.o
4. Bratislava fotogenic / Bratislava fotogenická
5. Buildings for Future / Budovy pre budúcnosť
6. Carpathian Foundation / Karpatská nadácia
7. Center for Philanthropy / Centrum pre filantropiu n.o.
8. Center of Environmental Activities / Centrum environmentálnych aktivít
9. Civic initiative for preservation of environment / Občianska iniciatíva za zachovanie ŽP
10. CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS SLOVAKIA / CLIMATE COMMUNICATIONS SLOVAKIA
11. Climate needs you / Klíma ťa potrebuje
12. Concerned Mothers / Znepokojené matky
13. Consumer protection organisation (S.O.S.) Poprad / Spoločnosť ochrany spotrebiteľov (S.O.S) Poprad
14. Ekopolis Foundation / Nadácia Ekopolis
15. EveryIndividualMatters
16. Freedom of Choice / Možnosť voľby
17. Fridays for Future Slovakia / Fridays for Future Slovensko
18. Friends of the Earth Slovakia – CEPA / Priatelia Zeme - CEPA
19. Good years 50plus / Dobré roky 50plus
20. Green Foundation / Green Foundation, nadácia
21. Greenpeace CEE Slovakia / Greenpeace Slovensko
22. Human Rights League Slovakia / Liga za ľudské práva
23. Institute for Public Affairs / Inštitút pre verejné otázky
24. Institute for the Circular Economy / Inštitút cirkulárnej ekonomiky, o.z.
25. Kapital / Kapitál
26. Natura Rusovce
27. No Time to Lose / Nestráčajme čas
28. Open Society Foundation / Nadácia otvorenej spoločnosti
29. Otherness Initiative / Iniciatíva Inakosť
30. OZ Liptov activists LIPA / OZ Liptovskí aktivisti LIPA
31. Passive House Institute Slovakia / Inštitút pre pasívne domy
32. People in Need Slovakia / Človek v ohrození, n.o.
33. Phoenix / Občianske združenie Phoenix - Phoenix Polgári Társulás
34. Rainbow PRIDE Bratislava / Dúhový PRIDE Bratislava
35. Slatinka Association / Združenie Slatinka
36. Slovak Association of Photovoltaic Industry / Slovenská asociácia fotovoltického priemyslu a OZE (SAPI)
37. Slovak Climate Initiative / Slovenská klimatická iniciatíva
38. So us – WOMEN / Žemy
39. Society for Sustainable Life / Spoločnosť pre trvalo udržateľný život (STUŽ)
40. SOSNA association / SOSNA, o.z.

41. Students without a name / Študenti bez mena
42. Sustainability Platform / Platforma udržateľnosti
43. SUSTO - Sustainability Tools
44. Youth for Climate / Mladí za klímu
45. ZO6 SNLP Bratislava / ZO6 SZOPK Bratislava

Bulgaria / Bulharsko:

46. Environmental Association Za Zemiata / Friends of the Earth Bulgaria / Екологично сдружение "За Земята"
47. Greenpeace CEE – Bulgaria / "Грийнпийс" България
48. BlueLink Foundation / Фондация "БлуЛинк"
49. CREAТА ASSOCIATION / Сдружение КРЕАКТА
50. Bobov dol Municipality / Община Бобов дол
51. Klub 8 Ltd/ Magazine 8 / Клуб 8 ООД/ издател на Списание 8
52. Shtastlivetsa Sofia Civic Association / Софийско гражданско сдружение "Щастливеца"
53. Regional Economic Development Agency of Stara Zagora / Агенция за регионално икономическо развитие - Стара Загора
54. Gorichka / Горичка
55. Bulgarian Photovoltaic Association / Българска фотоволтаична асоциация
56. Ecological Manifesto – МанЕко / Екологичен манифест - МанЕко
57. Bulgarian Environmental Partnership Foundation / Фондация "ЕкоОбщност"

Czech Republic/ Česko:

58. Nádech z.s.
59. Chebsko for Climate / Chebsko za klima, z.s.
60. Doctors for future, Czech republic / Doctors for future, Česká republika
61. Parents for future, Czech republic
62. ZO ČSOP JARO Jaroměř
63. Centre for Transport and Energy / Centrum pro dopravu a energetiku, z.s.
64. Czech for Climate / Česko za klima, z.s.
65. PILGRIM - University of Nature / PILGRIM - Potulná univerzita přírody
66. Network of ecological counseling STEP / Síť ekologických poraden STEP
67. Eurosolar.cz, the national section of the European Association / Eurosolar.cz, národní sekce evropské asociace
68. Extinction Rebellion Czech Republic / Extinction Rebellion Czech Republic - Rebelie proti vyhynutí, z.s.
69. NESEHNUTÍ – Independent Social Ecological Movement
70. Na mysli, z.ú.
71. Climate Coalition Olomouc / Klimatická koalice Olomouc
72. Faculty of Environment, Jan Evangelista Purkyně University / Fakulta životního prostředí, Univerzita Jana Evangelisty Purkyně
73. Calla - Association for Preservation of the Environment / Calla - Sdružení pro záchranu prostředí
74. Parents for Climate Liberec / Rodiče za klima Liberec, z. s.
75. Slušná firma, z.s.
76. Juniperia, z.s.
77. JRK Czech republic / JRK Česká republika s.r.o.

78. CZ Biom z.s.
79. Limity jsme my
80. EkoWATT CZ s. r. o.
81. EkoWATT z. s. / EkoWATT z. s., Středisko pro obnovitelné zdroje a úspory energie
82. Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation / Nadace Partnerství
83. Institute for Circular Economy / Institut Cirkulární Ekonomiky
84. Fair Venture s.r.o.
85. Institute of Anxiety / Institut úzkosti
86. ARE | are-events.org z. s.
87. Czechia Against Poverty and Inequality / Česko proti chudobě a nerovnostem
88. Hnutí DUHA - Friends of the Earth Czech Republic / Hnutí DUHA - Přátelé země
89. Chemické divadlo, z.s.
90. Ecological Institute Veronica / Ekologický institut Veronica (ZO ČSOP Veronica)
91. Tři Ocásci sou družstvo. Sociální družstvo!
92. Greenpeace Czech Republic / Greenpeace Česká republika
93. ArtMap
94. MAK! / MAK! (mobilní architektonická kancelář)
95. UM UM Community Festival of Contemporary Theatre and Arts / UM UM o.z.
96. Arnika
97. Líšeň Sobě z. s.
98. Centre for Experimental Theatre / Centrum experimentálního divadla, p. o. (Divadlo Husa na provázku, HaDivadlo, Terén)
99. SCHOOL OF IMPROVISATION / ŠKOLA IMPROVIZACE - IMPROVIZUJ S.R.O.
100. Universities for climate / Univerzity za klima
101. Flash Art
102. NaZemi
103. Lipka - školské zařízení pro environmentální vzdělávání Brno / Lipka
104. Malvazinky Patriots / Přátelé Malvazinek, z.s.
105. The Bearable Living in the Center of Prague association / Snesitelné bydlení v centru Prahy, z.s.
106. C2c - circle of curators and critics / C2c - kruh kurátorů a kritiků, z.s.
107. Fridays For Future Czech Republic / Fridays For Future Česká republika
108. Society and Economy Trust / Trast pro ekonomiku a společnost
109. Etc. galerie / Etc. gallery
110. Ateliér Intermédií FaVU VUT / Intermedia Studio FaVU VUT
111. Punctum, z.s.
112. Geisslers Hofcomoedianten, z. s.
113. ZO ČSOP Morava
114. ZO ČSOP Arion
115. Faculty of Arts and Architecture, Technical University of Liberec / Fakulta umění a architektury, Technická univerzita v Liberci
116. Art for climate / Umění pro klima
117. Entrance Gallery / Galerie Entrance
118. Studio New Media2, AVU / Ateliér Nová Média 2, AVU
119. Artyčok.TV
120. 35M2 gallery /Galerie 352M
121. Flora Theatre Festival, z.s.
122. Platform for Social Housing / Platforma pro sociální bydlení

- 123. Czech Union for Nature Conservation - Environmental Service Organization / ČSOP
Ekologická servisní organizace
- 124. Palm Oil Watch International / Koalice proti palmovému oleji
- 125. Jindřich Chalupecký Society / Společnost Jindřicha Chalupeckého
- 126. Centre for Contemporary Art FUTURA / Centrum současného umění FUTURA
- 127. Czech Climate Coalition / Klimatická koalice

Europe / Európa:

- 128. Climate Reality Europe

Hungary / Maďarsko:

- 129. NSC-FoE Hungary / Magyar Természetvédők Szövetsége (MTVSZ)
- 130. Green Connection Association / Zöld Kapcsolat Egyesület
- 131. Energiaklub Climate Policy Institut / Energiaklub Egyesület
- 132. Hungarian Energy Efficiency Institute (MEHI) / Magyar Energiahatékonysági Intézet (MEHI)
- 133. Clean Air Action Group / Levegő Munkacsoport
- 134. Hungarian PV and Solar Collector Association / Magyar Napelem Napkollektor Szövetség
- 135. WWF Hungary / WWF Magyarország
- 136. Hungarian Climate Alliance / Éghajlatvédelmi Szövetség
- 137. Environmental Planning and Education Network / Környezeti Tervezési és Nevelési Hálózat
- 138. Energy Efficient Wekerle Civic Society / Energiahatékony Wekerle Civil Társaság
- 139. Protect the Future Association / Védegylet Egyesület
- 140. KÖVET Association for Sustainable Economies / KÖVET Egyesület a Fenntartható Gazdaságért
- 141. GreenDependent Institute / GreenDependent Intézet
- 142. Women for Balaton Association / Nők a Balatonért Egyesület
- 143. Peter Beretzk Nature Protection Club / Beretzk Péter Természetvédelmi Klub
- 144. Green Circle of Pecs / Pécsi Zöld Kör
- 145. Green Action Association / Zöld Akció Egyesület
- 146. Green Circle / Zöld Kör
- 147. TU Budapest Green Circle / BME Zöld Kör
- 148. Environmental Management and Law Association / Környezeti Management és Jog Egyesület
- 149. Extinction Rebellion Hungary / Extinction Rebellion Magyarország
- 150. Reflex Environmental Association / Reflex Környezetvédő Egyesület
- 151. Consultants for Sustainable Development / Tanácsadók a Fenntartható Fejlődésért
- 152. Tree of Life Environmental Protection Association / Életfa Környezetvédő Szövetség
- 153. Magosfa Foundation for Environmental Education and Ecotourism / Magosfa Környezeti Nevelési és Ökoturisztikai Alapítvány
- 154. CSEMETE Association Of Nature And Environmental Protection / CSEMETE Természet- és Környezetvédelmi Egyesület
- 155. Greenpeace Hungary / Greenpeace Magyarország Egyesület
- 156. Serpentes Foundation / Serpentes Alapítvány

- 157. Hydra Nature Protection and Youth Association / Hidra Természetvédelmi és Ifjúsági Egyesület
- 158. CEEweb for Biodiversity / CEEweb a Biológiai Sokféleségért

Poland / Poľsko:

- 159. Institute for Sustainable Development Foundation / Instytut na rzecz Ekorozwoju
- 160. WWF Poland / Fundacja WWF Polska
- 161. The Ecological Association EKO-UNIA / Stowarzyszenie Ekologiczne EKO-UNIA
- 162. Cycling Lublin' Association / Stowarzyszenie "Rowerowy Lublin"
- 163. Towarzystwo na Rzecz Ochrony Przyrody
- 164. Institute for Urban Actions / Fundacja Instytut Działań Miejskich
- 165. The Centre for Environmental Activities "Zrodla" / Ośrodek Działań Ekologicznych "Źródła"
- 166. Earth and Us Centre of Ecological Education / Ziemia i My Centrum Edukacji Ekologicznej
- 167. Polish Green Network / Polska Zielona Sieć
- 168. Stowarzyszenie Pracownia na rzecz Wszystkich Istot
- 169. Urban Movements Congress / Kongres Ruchów Miejskich
- 170. Foundation of the Centre for Research and Protection of the Human Environment "HABITAT" / Fundacja Centrum Badań i Ochrony Środowiska Człowieka "HABITAT" Poland
- 171. Polish Green Building Council / Polskie Stowarzyszenie Budownictwa Ekologicznego
- 172. Fundacja "Rozwój TAK - Odkrywki NIE"
- 173. Polish Ecological Club Mazovian Branch / Polski Klub Ekologiczny Okręg Mazowiecki
- 174. Norden Centrum Scientific Foundation / Fundacja Naukowa Norden Centrum
- 175. alter eko foundation / Fundacja alter eko
- 176. Society for Nature and Man / Towarzystwo dla Natury i Człowieka
- 177. Compassion in World Farming Poland / Fundacja Compassion in World Farming Polska
- 178. Global Action Plan Poland / Fundacja GAP Polska
- 179. Society for the Earth / Towarzystwo na rzecz Ziemi
- 180. Institute of Public Affairs / Instytut Spraw Publicznych
- 181. Greenpeace CEE Poland / Fundacja Greenpeace Polska
- 182. Young for Climate Poland / Stowarzyszenie Młodzi dla Klimatu
- 183. Common Thing Foundation / Fundacja Rzecz Społeczna

Romania/ Rumunsko:

- 184. 2Celsius / Asociația 2Celsius
- 185. Greenpeace CEE Romania
- 186. Kogayon Association / Asociația Kogayon
- 187. WWF Romania
- 188. Bankwatch Romania / Asociația Bankwatch România
- 189. National Alliance of Student Organizations in Romania / Alianța Națională a Organizațiilor Studențești din România
- 190. Romanian Youth Council / Consiliul Tineretului din România