



Key actions for the European Parliament to promote preservation of the European Green Belt:

- The Green Belt is a unique monument of European history and the longest existing ecological network of the continent. Its preservation and development is a pan-European project and trans-boundary challenge. To highlight and support this, we suggest that the European Parliament **adopt a resolution for the protection of the European Green Belt**, also expressing support for the associated European Green Belt Initiative.
- The EU Parliament is asked to initiate and support **further trans-boundary projects and activities** and to facilitate **financial support programmes for the Green Belt**:
 - The Green Belt should be included into the EU's structural funding programmes by clearly naming it as an eligible objective. This includes the **support of ecological land use and sustainable regional development** in the border regions. It is of special importance to coordinate the different EU-supporting systems in a right way: The **ending of unregulated support of biogas plants and biomass production** is urgently needed to save the nature related areas along the Green Belt.
 - A **LIFE+ NGO operating grant** for overall Green Belt coordination should be promoted.
 - **Tourism funding programmes** should integrate activities to develop the Green Belt as a living historical monument, e.g. as a cooperation project with the Iron Curtain Trail.
 - **Unpaid voluntary work** must remain eligible as own expenditures within EU co-financed projects, because this is of high importance for many small organisations already actively engaged in the Green Belt.
 - The EP shall help to identify and approach **other suitable funding mechanisms** for the Green Belt initiative.
- A special focus should be put on **harmonising conservation management** on both sides of the former Iron Curtain and closing gaps by extending nature reserves across borders.
- **Green Infrastructure: European traffic and infrastructure routes** must not divide the Green Belt, therefore green bridges or similar measures should be applied for unavoidable crossings. New EU-financed infrastructure measures must **follow ecological requirements** and not cut the Green Belt, as this will permanently foil its consistency. Currently, planned hydro-power plants at river Mura threaten the Green Belt, just like river training and the construction of hydro-power plants at several sites on the Balkans.
- Due to its outstanding significance for nature conservation and its historic dimension as a European commemorative landscape, the EU should support the nomination of the Green Belt as **UNESCO-World Heritage**.
- EU-support of the **coordination structure of the initiative and communication work** is of central importance to highlight the European scale and commitment.

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