



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL  
THE PRESIDENT**



Brussels, 23 November 2012  
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### **Remarks by President Herman Van Rompuy following the European Council**

*The European Council gives its President the mandate together with the President of the European Commission to continue the work and pursue consultations in the coming weeks to find a consensus among the 27 over the Union's Multiannual Financial Framework for the period 2014-2020.*

*The bilateral talks yesterday and the constructive discussion within the European Council show a sufficient degree of potential convergence to make an agreement possible in the beginning of next year.*

*We should be able to bridge existing divergences of views. A European budget is important for the cohesion of the Union and for jobs and growth in all our countries.*

We discussed as I said the Multiannual Financial Framework. We must work on a moderation budget. The times call for it. Every euro must be carefully spent. That's why we foresee more scrutiny and reporting. There is a certain number of things we want the Union to do for our countries and citizens and it must be able to do them.

Everybody also agrees on another point: this must be a budget for growth. A budget that focuses on jobs, on innovation, on research. That's why in my proposal the spending on competitiveness and jobs is more than 50% higher than in the period 2007-2013. Here especially this budget is not a zero sum game. Growth in one country benefits all.

# **P R E S S**

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Last week I circulated my first draft proposal. Yesterday I carefully listened to all the colleagues, and I put a new proposal on the table.

Compared to the previous version, it keeps the budget's overall total at a stable level. It's 80 billion euro below the Commission proposal and a real cut compared to the 2007-2013 period. This is a first in EU budget talks.

My proposal, compared again to the previous version, includes increases in agriculture and cohesion funds, with total figures for these headings still lower than in the Commission proposal. It compensates these shifts with cuts in other areas.

We will need some more time to finalise this solution. This is the budget for the rest of the decade. And the next 7 years will be crucial, to put Europe back on the path of recovery and growth. So we must get it right.

There's no need to dramatise: these budget negotiations are so complex they generally take two goes. That was also the case last time around, in 2005, when negotiations were first chaired by Jean Claude Juncker and then finalized by the British Presidency.

So the work will go on, as we said in the statement on which the European Council agreed. There are still existing divergences of views but there is still a sufficient degree of potential convergence to make an agreement possible in the beginning of next year.

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