

## Council must present serious compromise proposals on EU's long-term budget

**“We are ready to accelerate the negotiations, but the Council does not show any real will to negotiate our key demands”, says Budgets Committee Chair Johan Van Overtveldt.**

“Parliament has been ready to negotiate the new Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF 2021-2027) with Council since November 2018. Since then we have insisted that we needed to be involved early enough in the negotiations to ensure a smooth process. Our demand was ignored completely and we were offered instead short and unilateral briefings ahead of and after the General Affairs Council meetings, which led nowhere”, said the Chair of the Committee on Budgets and of the EP’s negotiating team for the next long-term EU budget and Own Resources reform, [Johan Van Overtveldt](#) (ECR, BE).

“Parliament’s requests have been known for two years, during which time we have waited for the Council to agree a position. Council is now asking the Parliament to accelerate and to have a deal in three weeks. This is not serious and disrespectful towards the role of this institution, and the citizens we represent.”

Mr Van Overtveldt added: “We are ready to accelerate the negotiations, but Council does not show a real will to negotiate on our key demands. So far we have seen no movement on the possibility to reinforce any of the EU programmes we have put forward. This is not an institutional battle. We are fighting to reinforce [15 concrete EU programmes](#), defending EU researchers, who are desperate about Council's cuts; companies who have seen much-needed financial support scrapped with the Council's decision to suppress the Solvency Support Instrument and to reduce Invest EU; students who see their possibilities to further learning reduced due to the cuts in Erasmus; health operators who are fighting every day to combat COVID-19 and face a proposal to slash a much needed Health Programme. Just to give a few examples.”

“We are also very concerned about the repercussions of the costs of repayment of the debt the EU is going to assume with “Next Generation EU” (NGEU). If Council does not commit without ambiguity to the introduction of new Own Resources, which Parliament is asking, the risk is that programmes will have to be further reduced, which is unacceptable. There are concrete ideas for new Own Resources on the table that would even support our strategic policy objectives. The EP does not want to see them evaporate. We need a robust and binding calendar to follow

up on”, the Chair continued.

“Last week, with an incredible acceleration of our work, [Parliament has cleared the way for Council for the ratification of the Own Resources Decision in the member states](#), thus kicking off the NGEU initiative. Now, Council tells us that they will not launch that until there is an agreement on the MFF. This is their political choice. It cannot be put on the back of Parliament, who has done its job responsibly.

Parliament is as eager as Council to find a quick agreement, but time has come now for Council to treat us as a partner and to seriously engage in negotiations so that a good agreement can be reached and that the EU programmes can enter into force as foreseen”, Mr Van Overtveldt underlined.

“The ball is in Council's court: member states need to move and to come up with serious counterproposals on the top-ups for EU programmes and on Own Resources. Parliament is not up for gambling of course, the Treaty foresees a safety net in case of no agreement, a contingency plan, which both the Commission and the Council have so far refused to consider, which would allow the programmes to start functioning on 1 January 2021 on the basis of the 2020 amounts”, Johan Van Overtveldt concluded.

### Further information

[Committee on Budgets](#)

[EU long-term budget: EP still fighting for a good agreement \(press release after 4th trilateral talks on MFF/OR, 18.09.2020\)](#)

[“EU long-term budget deal must be improved for Parliament to accept it” \(EP press release, 23 July\)](#)

### Contacts

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Armin WISDORFF

Press Officer

☎ (+32) 2 28 40924 (BXL)

☎ (+33) 3 881 73780 (STR)

📱 (+32) 498 98 13 45

✉ [armin.wisdorff@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:armin.wisdorff@europarl.europa.eu)

✉ [budg-press@europarl.europa.eu](mailto:budg-press@europarl.europa.eu)

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