

2020 EU budget: Council supports continued focus on growth, innovation, security and migration

The Council wants the EU's budget to continue to focus on strengthening the European economy and boosting its competitiveness. Other priorities include ensuring sufficient funding for migration and the protection of the EU's external borders, strengthening civil protection, tackling climate change and providing adequate resources for external action in line with the EU's strategic interests.

As in previous years, member states also insist on budgetary prudence and discipline. They want to ensure sufficient leeway in the budget to allow the EU to react to unforeseen needs.

These principles guide the Council's position on the 2020 EU budget, adopted today.

Next year's budget is about continuity. Member states want to focus on the key policy areas and best-performing programmes where there is clear European added value, whilst also ensuring a prudent approach. I am glad that the Council's position was adopted with the overwhelming support of the member states. This provides a strong basis for our discussions with the Parliament in the coming months.

Kimmo Tiilikainen, State Secretary, Ministry of Finance of Finland, chief Council negotiator for the 2020 EU budget

The Council continues to support the reinforcement of the programmes under the "Competitiveness for growth and jobs" heading, which would receive €24.0 billion, or +2.72% compared to 2019. This comes on top of the resources dedicated to economic, social and territorial cohesion (€58.5 billion, or +2,23%).

More funding compared to 2019 is foreseen, for instance, for Horizon 2020, Europe's satellite navigation systems EGNOS and Galileo, the energy strand of the Connection Europe Facility, Erasmus+ and the European Defence Industrial Development Programme.

In the field of security and migration, the EU budget will continue to support member states and the EU measures that have been put in place in the past few years. Additional resources are budgeted for the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) (€101.4 million, or +32.4% compared to 2019) to set up a standing corps of 10 000 border guards by 2027.

Overall, the draft Council position foresees an amount of €166.8 billion in

commitment appropriations and €153.1 billion in payment appropriations. This is an increase of +0.6 % in commitments and +3.3 % in payments when compared to the budget voted in 2019.

Based on a detailed technical analysis of the absorption capacity and implementation of each programme, the commitments have been decreased by - €1.5 billion compared to the Commission's draft budget. On payments, significant adjustments were not considered necessary or appropriate.

The Council's decision confirms the agreement reached by EU ambassadors at the meeting of the Permanent Representatives Committee on 10 July.

Amendments to the 2019 EU budget

The Council also adopted today its position on four amending budgets to the 2019 EU budget proposed by the Commission, approving them without changes.

The aim of these amendments is to include in the 2019 budget the surplus resulting from the implementation of the budget year 2018 (€1.8 billion) and to reinforce Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ programmes by €100 million as agreed during the negotiations on the 2019 EU budget.

In addition, €293.6 million are budgeted to provide financial assistance to Italy, Romania and Austria in response to natural disasters that hit these countries in 2018.

The revenue and expenditure sides of the 2019 budget are also updated to take account of the latest developments, including the postponement of the withdrawal of the UK from the EU to 31 October 2019. In particular, the European Parliament's budget has been reinforced by +€15.1 million to cover the cost of an information campaign ahead of the European elections in the UK as well as the costs of parliamentary assistance.

Next steps

State Secretary Tiilikainen will present the Council's position on the 2020 EU budget to the European Parliament at the September plenary. The EP is expected to adopt its amendments to the Council's position on 23 October.

This will trigger a three-week conciliation period, which will start on 29 October and end on 18 November. The aim of this conciliation process is to reach an agreement between the Council and the European Parliament on the 2020 EU budget.

The draft amending budgets to the 2019 EU budget are expected to be adopted by the EP plenary in September and October.