

## Article – Budget and recovery: no more excuses for delays, says budgets committee chair



During a [Facebook live](#) on 11 November, [Van Overtveldt](#) (ECR, Belgium) described [the agreement reached with the Council on the EU's long-term budget](#) as “rather successful” and “a positive thing”. However, he explained there are still hurdles to be overcome before the money from the recovery plan starts reaching people and companies across Europe and urged the Council and EU countries to finalise the process.

Parliament intends to give its final approval on the long-term budget at the plenary session at the end of November, said Van Overtveldt. He emphasised that Parliament has never sought to slow things down: “There has been some talk in the last weeks about Parliament being responsible for delays. Stop that! That was never the case and that is certainly not the case now.”

The budgets committee chair noted that it is now up to the Council and the member states to approve the EU recovery plan. This requires unanimity in the Council and ratification of the decision to borrow funds on the market in all member states. Van Overtveldt said that in the best case scenario, the Commission would be able to go to the market in early spring.

He also spoke of the letter that Hungary's prime minister Viktor Orbán sent

to European Council president Charles Michel, threatening to veto the agreement on the EU budget and recovery. Hungary has reservations about the provisional deal between Parliament and Council establishing [a mechanism suspending budget payments to an EU country found to be in breach of the rule of law](#).

“We know there is a problem with Mr Orbán and the rule of law [file] but you cannot leave the rest of Europe waiting for the €750 billion needed to fight this pandemic. There are millions of jobs on the line today and every day wasted is terrible for all the people living in uncertainty and for all the companies on the brink of shutdown.”

The budgets committee chair detailed the increases secured by Parliament for key EU programmes in areas including [health](#), research and young people. The total amount of these top-ups is €15 billion, and another €1 billion will be put aside if unexpected future crises need to be addressed.

He noted that the deal reached with the Council allows for the Parliament to play a bigger role as part of the EU’s budgetary authority on the oversight of how the [recovery funds](#) are spent. “It’s not a question of rights – Parliament has a duty to exercise oversight on the amounts involved.”