



**COUNCIL OF  
THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**INTRODUCTORY NOTE**

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from: Presidency

to: Council

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Subject: Multiannual Financial Framework (2014-2020)

- Sections of Negotiating Box relating to Headings 1 (except cohesion and CEF), 3, 4, 5 and to horizontal issues
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In the framework of discussions on the future Multiannual Financial Framework, the Presidency is hereby submitting to delegations the sections of Negotiating Box relating to Headings 1 (except cohesion and CEF), 3, 4, and 5 and to horizontal issues. The document is found in addendum 1.

These sections of the Negotiating Box were examined at the Friends of the Presidency group (MFF) and in Coreper. The discussions in these fora resulted in some slight modifications of the text.

These are limited in scope as the Presidency awaits the political guidance of the Council for future work.

The document is drawn up and developed under the responsibility of the Presidency. It is therefore not binding on any delegation. The Presidency continues to be guided by the principle that nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. Following further discussions, the Box will continuously be updated during the coming months and in the run-up to the June European Council. Currently, the text contains some placeholders on issues which, in the Presidency's view, need further work and will be developed further. It also provides options on some issues where the Presidency, after listening to delegations, will propose choices or compromise solutions at a later stage.

During the discussion in Coreper a number of issues attracted the attention of many delegations. These were i.a.:

1. Reconciliation of the heavy budgetary constraints with measures aiming at enhancing smart, sustainable and inclusive growth in line with the Europe 2020 strategy objectives.
2. Whether the macroeconomic conditionality should be discussed and developed under the general part of the negotiation box or under the cohesion policy.
3. Excellence in the science base in research and innovation and its link with the "stairway to excellence" to be provided by the Cohesion policy.
4. The importance of ensuring appropriate levels of savings in administrative expenditure without undermining the efficiency and effectiveness of the European civil service.
5. The issue of placing certain instruments outside or inside the MFF as illustrated by the options presented by the Presidency

The Presidency has taken good note of the comments made by delegations on these and other issues during the preparatory discussions. Against this background Ministers are invited to concentrate on what they consider the politically most important issue(s) relating to the presented sections of the Negotiating Box. Delegations will be requested to limit their interventions to a maximum of 3 minutes.