

Press statement by President Costa following the meeting with Ireland's Taoiseach, Micheál Martin

Dear Taoiseach, dear Micheál. Thank you very much for your very kind and warm welcome here in Dublin, and for this opportunity, first of all to discuss with you the progress of the excellent work you are doing leading the Council during this semester, and also for the opportunity we had to discuss, from the “One Europe, One Market” agenda to enlargement, the different issues.

I wish you again all the best as the rotating presidency of the Council.

I come to the end of the fourth week of my “Tour des Capitales”.

Listening directly to the members of the European Council, in their capitals, has proved to be extremely useful to prepare our work in the next months.

This autumn marks a decisive moment for our Union. We are working towards one of the most consequential decisions for the European Union: reaching agreement on our next long-term budget for 2028–2034. Ireland, as the Council presidency, is playing a crucial role in bringing us closer to an agreement by the end of this year. Thank you, Micheál, for your commitment and your determination on this important file. Our teams are working hard, together, towards the same goal: reaching an agreement by the end of the year.

Today’s meeting was an opportunity for us to compare notes. I shared with the Taoiseach the main insights from my “Tour des Capitales” and from the discussions I have had. I am also looking forward to continuing these discussions - with the Prime Minister of the Netherlands on 9 October, and with the Prime Minister of Sweden once the new government is constituted.

Conversations so far have given me a clear sense of where we stand on the next multiannual budget. Four main themes have emerged from my meetings with Leaders.

First – I heard unanimous support for the objective to come to an agreement by the end of the year. Leaders know that this is necessary, so that we can have a new long-term budget in place by 1 January 2028. That is the only way to ensure that there is no interruption in European Union funding for farmers, for businesses, for researchers, for students, and for other recipients. European citizens, the European economy, need stability and predictability. And we need to provide them with that stability and that predictability through a timely adoption of the next European budget.

Second, we are now entering a decisive phase in the negotiations and leaders are fully engaged in them. Their priorities and positions may differ. But at the same time, they are aware that to reach an agreement, we need a balance, a package, between three main aspects – the size and distribution of the budget; the size of national contributions; and the new own resources. The revised “negotiation box” that the Irish presidency is due to present ahead of our European Council in October will set the stage for our discussions. It must bring us closer to an agreement.

Third, leaders recognise that the geopolitical environment has changed since we last negotiated the budget in 2020. And this new reality calls for a modernised budget, with a new structure. One that delivers on our shared priorities in areas like defence and security, competitiveness, and innovation. But we cannot build that future by abandoning what already works: our agricultural and cohesion policies have been the backbone of prosperity and resilience across Europe.

Fourth – to deliver on our ambitions and priorities, leaders agree that the European Union needs new revenue streams. Like national budgets, the European budget must deliver on its priorities within the limits of finite resources. Most of it is financed through member states’ national contributions. And we need to keep those contributions within reasonable limits. That is why a balanced and ambitious package of so-called new own resources will be an indispensable piece of this difficult puzzle.

In short, I want our October European Council meeting to provide clarity on an updated and revised basket of new own resources. We must remember what is at stake. A strong budget is the cornerstone of Europe’s capacity to act. Because, when we combine

our efforts and invest together, we can deliver greater impact and build a Union that is more competitive, more secure, and more resilient.

Our citizens expect a lot from the European Union. And we will not disappoint them. We are building a Europe that can better defend European citizens, in an unpredictable, challenging, sometimes even hostile world.

This Europe, enjoying greater strategic autonomy, requires a more competitive economy. And we are progressing on the “One Europe, One Market” agenda, which sets concrete targets to be achieved by the end of this year and by the end of next year in crucial areas:

- reducing unnecessary administrative burdens and bureaucracy
- creating a business-friendly economic environment
- mobilising more private investment to help businesses grow and innovate, including in the digital and AI areas
- reducing strategic dependencies, and
- making energy more affordable

A competitive economy is not an end in itself. It must deliver for our citizens. And affordable housing for all is a key component of a European economy that is built for its citizens. I'm grateful to Ireland for putting this topic high on the agenda of their presidency.

To conclude, as Ireland's presidency motto says, “Europe's strength comes from unity”. We share that goal and every day we have been working hand in hand to achieve it. It will be a pleasure to continue doing so, dear Mícheál, in the months to come.

Thank you very much.

Press office - General Secretariat of the Council of the EU

Rue de la Loi 175 - B-1048 BRUSSELS - Tel.: +32 (0)2 281 6319

press@consilium.europa.eu - www.consilium.europa.eu/press