

ROME, BUCHAREST, SOFIA, NICOSIA, ZAGREB, PRAGUE, TALLINN, ATHENS, BUDAPEST, RIGA, VILNIUS, VALLETTA,
WARSAW, LISBON, LJUBLJANA, BRATISLAVA, MADRID

2nd October 2026

Dear Taoiseach,

As the negotiations on the Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034 enter a decisive phase, we are writing to you, in your capacity as President of the Council of the European Union, to share some considerations ahead of the forthcoming revision of the Negotiating Box.

We fully recognise that the European Union is facing a changing strategic environment, bringing new challenges but also new opportunities for common European action. The next MFF must enable Europe to seize these opportunities while responding to growing challenges, including security and defence, competitiveness, connectivity, energy security and resilience. At the same time, this must not come at the expense of treaty-based policies, which remain the backbone of European integration and themselves contribute to addressing these new challenges. Therefore, the total volume set in the Cyprus Presidency Negotiating Box remains the relevant basis to effectively address all these financial needs. This is not a time for Europe to lower its ambitions.

Cohesion Policy and the Common Agricultural Policy are long-standing policies, but their objectives are as relevant as ever. They promote convergence between Member States and regions, strengthen the Single Market and support rural, less developed. They also contribute to Europe's competitiveness and food security, while providing tangible support to millions of European citizens and demonstrating the added value of common European spending. Both policies have repeatedly adapted to new economic and social realities while remaining true to their Treaty objectives. They also generate direct and indirect benefits for economies across the European Union.

We therefore believe that the overall funding for Cohesion Policy and the CAP must be preserved in the next MFF. As highlighted in our Joint Declaration of 26 May, these policies already face reductions in real terms under the Commission's proposal, despite the overall increase in the size of the MFF. Reducing them further would not modernise the EU budget; it would only weaken it and risk undermining public support for the European project. Moreover, the new MFF already entails a fundamental transformation of its structure, programming and approach to spending.

Europe's new priorities require adequate additional resources, while the funding for Agriculture and Cohesion must be preserved. In this regard, we stand ready to work constructively on the revenue side, including on proposals for new own resources that would ease direct pressure on national budgets. Such resources should be genuine, fair, simple and non-regressive, in line with our May Declaration. We will carefully consider the adjustments to the proposals that the Commission has committed to present.

H.E. Micheál MARTIN
The Taoiseach of Ireland

Cc: H.E. António Costa
President of the European Council

We should also consider, as options, a more gradual repayment of NextGenerationEU, which could create additional fiscal space in the next MFF, subject to an assessment of its impact on the overall cost of repayment, as well as limited and targeted European debt instruments, for clearly identified strategic priorities, in line with May Declaration. Finally, the current system of rebates should have no place in the next MFF. Rebates were intended to address an excessive burden on the contributions of certain Member States. The circumstances that originally justified such corrections have fundamentally changed. In assessing national contributions, account should be taken not only of their absolute level, but also of Member States' different levels of prosperity and the relative effort required from each of them.

We count on the Irish Presidency to duly take these considerations into account in preparing the forthcoming Negotiating Box and stand ready to work with the Presidency and all Member States towards an ambitious, balanced and adequately financed MFF.

Yours sincerely,

Giorgia Meloni

President of the Council of Ministers
of the Italian Republic

Rumen Radev

Prime Minister of Bulgaria

Andrej Plenković

Prime Minister of Croatia

Kristen Michal

Prime Minister of Estonia

Péter Magyar

Prime Minister of Hungary

Gitanas Nausėda

President of the Republic of Lithuania

Donald Tusk

Prime Minister of Poland

Janez Janša

Prime Minister of Slovenia

Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón

President of the Government of Spain

Nicușor Dan

President of Romania

Nikos Christodoulides

President of Cyprus

Andrej Babiš

Prime Minister of the Czech Republic

Kyriakos Mitsotakis

Prime Minister of Greece

Andris Kulbergs

Prime Minister of Latvia

Robert Abela

Prime Minister of Malta

Luís Montenegro

Prime Minister of Portugal

Robert Fico

Prime Minister of Slovakia