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NOTE

From: Presidency
To: Council
Subject: Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) 2021-2027
- State of play

1. On 11 December 2018, the General Affairs Council discussed a draft of the Negotiating Box prepared under the Austrian Presidency.¹
2. On 14 December 2018, the European Council took note of the Austrian Presidency's progress report and called on the Romanian Presidency to continue that work and develop an orientation for the next stage of the negotiations, with a view to achieving an agreement in the European Council in autumn 2019.²
3. On 8 January 2019, the Romanian Presidency informed the General Affairs Council (GAC) of its objectives regarding the future Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), including its intention to streamline the draft Negotiating Box ahead of the June European Council.
4. The same week, the Presidency started work with delegations at technical level to identify elements, which could contribute to the simplification of the draft Negotiating Box.

¹ doc. ST 14759/18

² doc. EUCO 17/18

5. An exchange of views was organised in COREPER on 6 February 2019 on the basis of detailed proposals for possible simplifications prepared by the Presidency under its own responsibility.³ The discussion demonstrated the importance of pursuing a balanced approach in this file, under the overarching principle that “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed.”
6. The Presidency will continue work to identify solutions and further advance discussions. It considers that both technical and political discussions will be required to achieve the simplification of the draft Negotiating Box.
7. To that end, it has started a series of technical bilateral meetings with delegations, and prepared an ambitious programme for the next weeks outlined in Annex. In particular, thematic discussion will feed into the work undertaken by the Presidency to prepare a simplified version of the draft Negotiating Box.
8. In parallel, the Presidency will pursue its efforts on the MFF-related sectoral proposals in order to reach partial general approaches in the Council where appropriate, and advance work with the European Parliament as far as possible under this legislature.
9. In this context, the Council is invited to:
 - provide guidance to the Presidency on its work programme, with the objective to deliver on the European Council tasking;
 - task the Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF and COREPER to pursue work with a view to preparing a revised version of the draft Negotiating Box ahead of the June European Council.

³ doc. ST 5690/19

PROVISIONAL WORK PROGRAMME ON THE MFF**February – March 2019**

Dates	Planned meetings
February	
Ongoing	Bilateral meetings at technical level
06/02	COREPER: simplification of the draft Negotiating Box
13/02	COREPER: GAC preparations
19/02	GAC: state of play and planning for further work
22/02	Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF (full day): – Flexibility provisions/special instruments/other horizontal elements (such as de-commitment rules)
March	
01/03	Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF: – Follow up of previous meeting (a.m.) – Macro-economic conditionalities and European Semester (p.m.)
07/03	Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF: – Follow up of the previous meeting (a.m.) – Climate mainstreaming (p.m.) – Horizontal discussion on migration (p.m.)
11/03	ORWP
12/03	Informal GAC (Bucharest)
13/03	COREPER: GAC preparations; information on discussions at the informal GAC
15/03	Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF: – Follow up of the previous meeting (a.m.) – Allocation methods for agriculture and cohesion (p.m.)
19/03	GAC: policy debate
20/03	Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF (a.m. only): – Follow up of the previous meeting – Rule of Law, including presentation of COM fiche
28/03	Ad hoc Working Party on the MFF: – Follow up of the previous meeting (a.m.) – Revenues/own resources (p.m.)