



European Council

Brussels, 15 October 2026

I. COMPETITIVENESS

1. Recalling its previous conclusions of March and June 2026, the European Council addressed ongoing efforts to strengthen EU competitiveness in all its dimensions, including Europe's prosperity and social model, and improve living standards in the challenging geoeconomic context.
2. The European Council reviewed the implementation of the 'One Europe, One Market' agenda in line with the interinstitutional roadmap, and welcomed the progress already achieved on key proposals. At the same time, it calls for additional progress by the co-legislators and Commission, both on the level of ambition and on the agreed timelines.
3. To that end, the European Council underlines in particular the importance of advancing negotiations on deliverables for 2026, notably the 28th regime for company law, the Industrial Accelerator Act, the European grids package, and the digital, environmental and automotive simplification packages. In this context, the European Council takes note of the recent Council position on the food and feed safety simplification package. It also takes note of the recent Council position on the market integration and supervision package, which, along with the securitisation package, is an essential component of the Savings and Investment Union. It invites the co-legislators to conclude negotiations on all these files from the roadmap, as well as the automotive package, by the end of the year and to keep up the momentum for 2027.
4. The European Council reconfirms the urgency of making decisive progress on deepening and integrating the Single Market by removing remaining barriers, including fragmented labelling and packaging requirements and territorial supply constraints, and preventing new ones; on simplification and reducing administrative burdens; on affordable energy prices and the Energy Union 2030; on fostering Europe's industrial renewal and innovation and reducing dependencies; and on mobilising investment.

5. In this context, the European Council calls on the Commission to come forward with further initiatives to streamline and accelerate planning and permitting procedures, to avoid gold-plating and to reduce administrative and regulatory burdens, including by putting forward a proposal to cut reporting obligations, in particular for SMEs. It reiterates its call for legislative and regulatory self-restraint and calls on the co-legislators to take appropriate steps to consistently avoid the introduction of unnecessary bureaucratic burdens during the legislative process.
6. The European Council underlines the critical importance of tackling high energy prices. It discussed the impact of the current geopolitical context on global supply chains, energy security, and energy and fuel prices, including the effects on citizens, in particular the most vulnerable, industry and the wider economy. The European Council underlines that the current situation urgently requires a coordinated European response of targeted and temporary measures, taking into account the Member States' specific circumstances and safeguarding the Single Market. To that end, the European Council welcomes the presentation of the Commission proposal on the postponement of certain obligations in the Methane Regulation. It also welcomes the intention of the Commission to:

- prolong the temporary state aid framework for the most exposed industrial sectors;
- develop a short-term framework to optimise the capacity and efficiency of EU refineries; and
- take initiatives to bundle energy demand on a voluntary basis.

The European Council invites the Commission to examine and put forward as needed further measures to address soaring energy prices in the short term while taking into account the specific circumstances of Member States, including the differences in electricity prices.

7. The European Council calls on the co-legislators to accelerate the ongoing legislative process on the Market Stability Reserve with a view to moderating excessive price volatility.
8. The European Council calls on the Commission to update the assessment of all impacts of ETS2, in particular its design and safeguards.

9. The European Council also emphasises the importance of internationally coordinated measures to stabilise energy supplies and calls for unrestricted trade in energy and energy products between partner countries.
10. Recalling the overarching imperative of reducing the EU's dependence on volatile fossil fuel markets, the European Council stresses that the energy transition remains the most effective strategy for achieving Europe's strategic autonomy, strengthening resilience, structurally lowering energy prices, and delivering the clean, abundant and homegrown energy needed to power the economy of the future, by accelerating electrification and deploying renewable and low-carbon energy sources, grids and energy storage, as well as fostering energy efficiency.
11. In the context of the ongoing review of the ETS system and to support European industrial competitiveness, the European Council reiterates the need to urgently ensure a well-functioning, transparent and predictable carbon market, to effectively protect against carbon leakage, to reduce the volatility of the carbon price and mitigate its impact on electricity prices, while preserving the essential role of the ETS in the climate and energy transition through a market-based price signal for carbon emissions that drives investment and innovation.
12. The European Council took stock of global macroeconomic imbalances, and invites the Commission to continue to engage in results-oriented dialogues, to make effective use of the EU's instruments, and to urgently enhance the EU toolbox with new instruments to better address these imbalances.

IV. NEXT MULTIANNUAL FINANCIAL FRAMEWORK

34. Following the presentation of an updated draft Negotiating Box by the Irish Presidency, the European Council discussed the key elements needed for a balanced compromise on the next Multiannual Financial Framework.
35. The European Council invites its President to take the negotiations forward with a view to a timely agreement. An agreement before the end of 2026 would allow for the adoption of legislative acts in 2027, which is necessary to ensure that EU funding reaches beneficiaries without interruption in January 2028.

VIII. ENLARGEMENT AND REFORMS

74. Recalling the Granada Declaration, the European Council held a strategic discussion on the way forward on enlargement and internal reforms.
75. Recalling its previous conclusions, the European Council stresses the continued importance of enlargement as a geostrategic investment in peace, security, stability and prosperity. It is a driver for improving the economic and social conditions of European citizens, reducing disparities between countries, and must foster the values on which the Union is founded. Looking ahead to the prospect of a further enlarged Union, both future Member States and the EU need to be ready at the time of accession. Aspiring members need to continue their reform efforts, notably in the area of rule of law, in line with the merit-based nature of the accession process and with the assistance of the EU. In parallel, the Union needs to advance internal work and reforms, set its long-term ambitions and the ways to achieve them, and address key questions related to its priorities and policies as well as its capacity to act. This will make the European Union stronger and enhance European sovereignty.
76. The European Council recalls that the accession process is merit-based and that each candidate country advances in its accession negotiations on the basis of its individual progress.
77. In that light, the European Council takes note of the Commission's Communication on 'Preparing for a wider Union' and calls on the Council to analyse all strands and, on the basis of this analysis, to take work forward.
78. The European Council welcomes the ongoing work on drafting the accession treaty with Montenegro. It notes the intention of the Irish Council Presidency to work towards the provisional closure of the remaining negotiating chapters, subject to the implementation of the corresponding reforms by Montenegro.