



Von der Leyen on EU long-term budget: our opportunity to make Europe fit for the future

Strasbourg, 12 February 2020

“All of us must be ready to find a common ground and we must find the right balance between old and new priorities”, Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, [said about the EU long-term budget](#) at the European Parliament debate today.

European leaders are gathering in Brussels on 20 February for a [special meeting](#) called by the President of the European Council Charles Michel, aiming to reach an agreement on the EU's Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF).

“The next long-term budget is our common opportunity to make Europe fit for the future”, von der Leyen said reminding what was at stake, from the ambition to become the first climate-neutral continent, to transitioning to digital economy and supporting our citizens.

Von der Leyen cautioned against losing any more time, after almost 2 years of deliberations. “If no budget is agreed soon, then next year we will not be able to fund the fight against climate change, to support research and innovation or to support our cohesion policies”.

She said we needed to have a 'European budget that delivers', particularly on common European concerns and tasks, such as research programmes, Erasmus, defence investments or migration funds.

“But most of all, citizens and companies want Europe to act on climate change”, she stressed describing it as a challenge that 'we can turn into an economic opportunity'.

Von der Leyen recognised that arriving at an agreement would be a serious challenge, but we have a 'duty to rise to [it] with determination', she said. “We know that citizens will not understand it if decision makers fail to make the funding available for policies needed”, she underlined, appealing to our common responsibility to deliver it.

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 [Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, at the EP plenary session](#)