



European Council
The President

Brussels, 8 October 2026

Dear colleagues,

In a context of increasing geopolitical uncertainty, our next meeting will have a strong focus on the economy, and on delivering answers to challenges to European competitiveness and to affordability.

For the short-term, we need to provide guidance to the Commission on targeted and temporary measures to alleviate the impact of high energy prices on our citizens and businesses – while continuing to pursue our strategy to reduce Europe's dependence of fossil fuels.

We also need to review the implementation of our 2026-2027 overarching competitiveness strategy – the 'One Europe, One Market' agenda, together with the President of the European Parliament. I know this is a major priority for all the Leaders and the Irish Presidency is working hard to achieve results. We need to ensure that additional progress is made, so that the ambition at Leaders' level – and the expectations that have been raised – are matched by concrete outcomes. These outcomes must translate into tangible opportunities for our companies, our start-ups and our citizens.

Furthermore, we will hear from the Commission – and provide further guidance – on the vital ongoing work to reduce the global macroeconomic imbalances that are having an impact on European industry.

The next Multiannual Financial Framework for 2028-2034 is the strategic instrument to build a Europe that is more prosperous, more competitive and strategically more autonomous. Achieving a timely agreement on the next MFF will be essential to provide our economies with the predictability and stability they need in an unstable and unpredictable world. That is what our farmers, our researchers, our regions, our companies and our citizens expect from the European Union. In October, the MFF negotiations will enter a decisive phase. Our next meeting must therefore bring us closer to consolidating the key elements required to come to a final agreement by the end of the year. I count on your leadership and collaborative spirit.

Ukraine remains a key priority for the European Union. We will reaffirm our continued support to Ukraine in the face of Russia's war of aggression. Considering Russia's escalating attacks on critical infrastructure, it will be important to hear from President Zelenskyy on the country's operational needs ahead of the coming winter. We will also take stock of Ukraine's progress on the path towards EU accession, by then hopefully having opened further clusters.

Our meeting will also address the increasingly reckless behaviour by Russia, including its campaign of hybrid attacks across Europe. We stand united and determined in the face of this escalation and will continue to advance our defence readiness agenda. Building on our previous work, we will take stock of implementation to maintain momentum and accelerate progress across all work strands, including on addressing critical military capability gaps.

We need to have two important strategic discussions. The first will focus on migration. The figures show that our comprehensive approach is working, as evidenced by a significant and sustained decrease in arrivals of irregular migrants. Adopted EU legislation is producing results. However, we must remain vigilant and prepared, act in solidarity when Member States face crisis situations and continue the work to improve our ability to deal with crises, including all cases of instrumentalization.

The second will address enlargement and reforms, with the Commission's communication on 'Preparing for a wider Union' feeding into the discussions. Our debate will provide strategic guidance on the way forward. It will specifically highlight the ongoing work on the accession Treaty with Montenegro, and the aim to conclude negotiations with that candidate country hopefully by the end of this year.

It is important that we revert to the situation in the Middle East. Our discussions will allow us to take stock of the latest developments in the region, including of their impact on freedom of navigation, a fundamental principle of international law, and maritime security – both crucial for global supply chains, especially with regard to energy, fertilisers and food.

Our meeting will start on Thursday 15 October, at 10:00 and my aim is to conclude the proceedings with lunch on Friday 16 October.

I look forward to seeing you in Brussels,



António COSTA